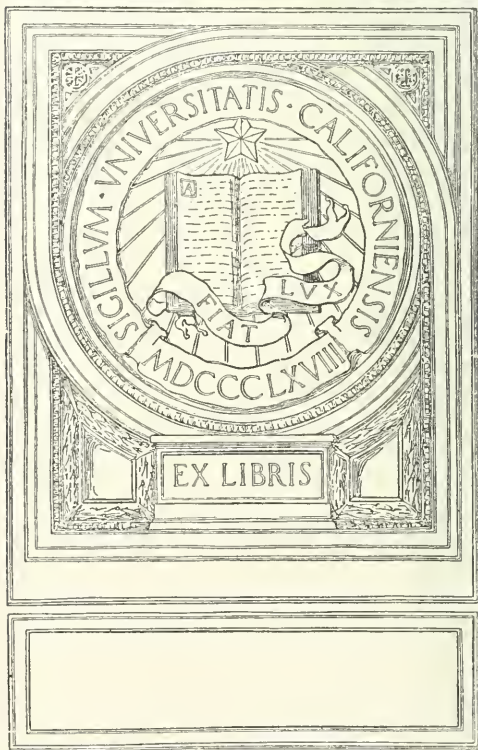


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The
POETS
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POETRY
of the
CENTURY

The
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of the
CENTURY

Charles Kingsley
to
James Thomson

Edited by
ALFRED H. MILES

HUTCHINSON & CO.
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PREFATORY.

THE poets treated of in the following pages are those born between the years 1822 and 1835, the period from Charles Kingsley to James Thomson—a period of great unrest in public life and of great variety in poetic output.

In this connection the Editor has an unusually long list of acknowledgments to make. He has to thank Messrs. Macmillan & Co. for permission to print from the latest text of the late Charles Kingsley's poems, and for the use of the poem, "The Forsaken Merman," by the late Mr. Matthew Arnold. He is under special obligations to Mr. Coventry Patmore for permission to quote from his works; and to Mrs. Sydney Dobell for similar permission concerning the poetry of the late Sydney Dobell; also to Messrs. Ellis & Elvey for the use of the poems of the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti; to the late Lord Lytton for the selection from his works; to Sir R. K. Wilson, Bart., for a selection from the poetry of the late William Cory; to the late William Allingham, and to his publishers, Messrs. Reeves & Turner, for permission to select from his works; and to the same firm for permission to print a representative selection from the poetry of James Thomson; to F. Percy Cotton, Esq., for permission to reprint the

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A. H. M.

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Charles Kingsley
to
James Thomson

Charles Kingsley.

1819—1875.

WHERE the activities of a man are spread over many and widely differing fields of labour, one does not generally find pre-eminence attained in any. Especially is this the case when the physical and the intellectual powers vie in energy. A uniform development of gifts may have for its result a charming and even powerful personality, soul and body reacting on one another in the helpful way which Browning loved to recognise ; but, while the man may become accomplished and capable, he is likely to stand far from unique in any one sphere of competition.

To such a class Charles Kingsley belonged. His native intensity of feeling would not confine itself to one mode of expression. A man of high purpose clearly conceived and followed, the sense of responsibility never left him, and though the pure physical ardour of the athlete in him was constantly relieving itself in vigorous verses, and culture and fancy together modelled many a poem of statelier cast, the mission of a reformer—light-bringer and evil-slayer—was the one thing which he never lost sight of.

If, therefore, we accept the theory that Genius consists in the abnormal development of some particular faculty, a humbler distinction must be

assigned him. Kingsley was, above all things, a worker, a worker with a keen moral consciousness, and a worker who sang at his work. His could never have been a life of mere æsthetic production. His best poems are those that he put forth, rhymeless and metreless, as stories; and these are instinct with the desire to promote nobility of conduct and character.

It was at Holne Vicarage, in Devonshire, on the 12th of June, 1819, that Charles Kingsley was born; but his early childhood was mostly spent at the old rectory of Barnack, in the fen district of Northampton.

From the fen country, whose wild and dreary beauties, since destroyed by wholesale draining and cultivation, are immortalised in one of his misnamed "*Prose Idylls*" and in the romance of "*Hereward*," the boy Kingsley removed with his parents to the living of Clovelly, by the North Devon sea.

In 1831 Charles was sent to school at Clifton, and thence to Helston. In 1838 he entered Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he won a scholarship, and made many friends, gaining a seat in his college boat and throwing himself with an almost reckless excitement into the sports of boxing, fencing, and shooting. Painful religious doubts depressed him about this time, but light came to him ere long.

He had purposed studying for the law, but decided to take holy orders, and read accordingly. He had come out first class in classics and senior optime in mathematics, pressing the work of three years' preparation into six months. He left Cambridge early in 1842, and was ordained in July, at the age of twenty-three, to the curacy of Eversley in Hampshire. Here as rector he laboured untiringly for

thirty-three years, bringing thither in 1844, as his wife, Fanny, the daughter of Pascoe Grenfell of Taplow Court—a noble woman who was the inspiration of his life.

The changes and improvements, sanitary and educational, which he at once set about, despite numberless hindrances and impediments, made the sorely neglected place before long a model parish. His duties were various and heavy, but to them he consecrated the great physical strength gained and exhibited in college athletics. The muscles, which had hardened in many a race on the river, won the interest and respect of the louts and Sunday loungers of Eversley; and the feet, which had once covered the road between Cambridge and London in a single day, got through a round of parish calls which to a weaker man would have been impossible. The old instincts of the naturalist and the sportsman were not a whit less keen, though time and opportunity for their indulgence grew less and less. Nothing is more characteristic than the flexible way in which, without neglecting the claims of his work as priest, he would snatch an hour's recreation—absolutely needful in his case—on the heather, or beside his beloved chalk-streams. One moment his face is watching, through driving wind and rain, the chances of float and fish, the next it is bending over some dying cottager, but always the same face, with the same earnestness and the same intensity of purpose. He won the jockeys and stablemen as he won the farmers and ploughmen, by his knowledge of and interest in their calling. He was all things to all men, yet without swerving ever one hair's breadth from the straight line of what he

conceived to be the true and the right. A born leader, he originated and carried forward good works with an enthusiasm that was contagious.

Amid a crowd of parish duties and a gradually increasing outside correspondence, Kingsley found time for some literary work beside the writing and publishing of sermons. A life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, slowly shaped itself into the drama of "The Saint's Tragedy" and was published in 1848. His active share in the London labour troubles, which culminated in the Chartist rising, led to his writing "Alton Locke." In 1851, "Yeast" was republished in book form, having run as a serial through *Fraser's Magazine*. "Hypatia" came out in a similar manner. To the year 1852 belong "Santa Maura," and the glowing hexameters of "Andromeda."

We have dwelt at some length on the characteristics of Charles Kingsley as a man, believing that his personality was a far greater power than his genius. But his was no mediocre muse. It loved best, perhaps, to exercise itself in "short swallow-flights" of song—lyrics on social or historical themes, of which "The Bad Squire" and "The Little Baltung" are examples, or bluff ballads of the countryside vigorous as his own "wild North-Easter." But scholarship and ardent love of beauty helped him to higher things, and in "Andromeda" Kingsley has shown a measure of power with which those who know him only through his lyrics would scarcely credit him. Many a canvas has gleamed with the statuesque figure of that old-world princess, but in none has it stood out more clearly than in the word-pictures of this fine poem. It is presented

to us steeped in the clear golden air of the southern day ; and the pure Pagan joy of existence, with its refusal to "look before and after," its absolute satisfaction with the present, and its shrinking even from the shadow of death, characterise most strikingly this late version of the oft-told tale. The poem opens with a lengthy introduction, and the richest colouring is reserved for the actual incident. It begins to glow in the passage where Kingsley sets in contrast with the girl's fear of coming doom the careless mirth of the nereids passing by.

"Onward they came in their joy, and before them the roll
of the surges

Sank, as the breeze sank dead, into smooth green foam-
fleck'd marble,

Awed ; and the crags of the cliff, and the pines of the
mountain were silent.

Onward they came in their joy, and around them the
lamps of the sea-nymphs,

Myriad fiery globes, swam panting and heaving ; and rain-
bows

Crimson and azure and emerald, were broken in star-
showers, lighting

Far through the wine-dark depths of the crystal, the
gardens of Nereus,

Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms of
the ocean.

Onward they came in their joy, more white than the
foam which they scattered,

Laughing and singing, and tossing and twining, while
eager, the Tritons

Blinded with kisses their eyes, unreprieved, and above
them in worship

Hovered the terns, and the seagulls swept past them on
silvery pinions

Echoing softly their laughter ; around them the wantoning
dolphins

Sighed as they plunged, full of love ; and the great sea-
horses which bore them

Curved up their crests in their pride to the delicate arms
of the maidens,
Pawing the spray into gems, till a fiery rainfall, unharming,
Sparkled and gleamed on the limbs of the nymphs, and the
coils of the mermen."

Then appears the god-sent deliverer, and again
we have a contrast: the distress of the trembling
maiden serving to throw into relief the buoyant
exuberance and glad-hearted assurance of the hero.

"Sudden she ceased, with a shriek: in the spray, like a
hovering foam-bow,
Hung, more fair than the foam-bow, a boy in the bloom of
his manhood,
Golden-haired, ivory-limbed, ambrosial; over his shoulder
Hung for a veil of his beauty the gold-fringed folds of the
goat-skin,
Bearing the brass of his shield, as the sun flashed clear on
its clearness;
Curved on his thigh lay a falchion, and under the gleam of
his helmet
Eyes more blue than the main shone awful; around him
Athené
Shed in her love such grace, such state, and terrible
daring.
Hovering over the water he came, upon glittering pinions,
Living, a wonder, outgrown from the tight-laced gold of
his sandals;
Bounding from billow to billow, and sweeping the crests
like a sea-gull;
Leaping the gulfs of the surge, as he laughed in the joy of
his leaping,
Fair and majestic he sprang to the rock; and the maiden
in wonder
Gazed for a while, and then hid in the dark-rolling wave of
her tresses,
Fearful, the light of her eyes; while the boy (for her sorrow
had awed him)
Blushed at her blushes, and vanished, like mist on the
cliffs at the sunrise.

Fearful at length she looked forth : he was gone : she, wild
with amazement,
Wailed for her mother aloud : but the wail of the wind
only answered.
Sudden he flashed into sight, by her side ; in his pity and
anger
Moist were his eyes ; and his breath like a rose-bed, as
bolder and bolder,
Hovering under her brows, like a swallow that haunts by
the house-eaves,
Delicate-handed, he lifted the veil of her hair ; while the
maiden
Motionless, frozen with fear, wept aloud."

His pity deepens into love, and her trouble gives
place to trustful, happy confidence, as he prepares
to do battle with the monster, whose approach is
graphically depicted. The almost pure Saxon English
of the descriptive lines—each in itself a vignette—is
characteristically Kingsley's ; these latter passages
are very similar to the prose version of the story in
"The Heroes."

"Then lifting her neck, like a sea-bird
Peering up over the wave, from the foam-white swells of
her bosom,
Blushing she kissed him : afar, on the topmost Italian
summit
Laughed in the joy of her heart, far-seeing, the queen
Aphrodité.

Loosing his arms from her waist he flew upward, await-
ing the sea-beast.
Onward it came from the southward, as bulky and black as
a galley,
Lazily coasting along, as the fish fled leaping before it ;
Lazily breasting the ripple, and watching by sandbar and
headland,
Listening for laughter of maidens at bleaching, or song of
the fisher,
Children at play on the pebbles, or cattle that pawed on
the sand-hills.

Rolling and dripping it came, where bedded in glistening
purple
Cold on the cold sea-weeds lay the long white sides of the
maiden,
Trembling, her face in her hands, and her tresses afloat on
the water."

Then the sportsman and the naturalist in Kingsley suggest a fine simile. Notice, too, the accuracy born of direct observation, which is evidenced in the seventh line.

"As when an osprey aloft, dark-eyebrowed, royally
crested,
Flags on by creek and by cove, and in scorn of the anger
of Nereus
Ranges, the king of the shore; if he see on a glittering
shallow,
Chasing the bass and the mullet, the fin of a wallowing
dolphin,
Halting, he wheels round slowly, in doubt at the weight of
his quarry,
Whether to clutch it alive, or to fall on the wretch like a
plummet,
Stunning with terrible talon the life of the brain in the
hindhead :
Then rushes up with a scream, and stooping the wrath of
his eyebrows
Falls from the sky, like a star, while the wind rattles hoarse
in his pinions.
Over him closes the foam for a moment; and then from
the sand-bed
Rolls up the great fish, dead, and his side gleams white in
the sunshine.
Thus fell the boy on the beast, unveiling the face of the
Gorgon ;
Thus fell the boy on the beast ; thus rolled up the beast in
his horror,
Once, as the dead eyes glared into his ; then his sides,
death-sharpened,
Stiffened and stood, brown rock, in the wash of the wan-
dering water.

Beautiful, eager, triumphant, he leapt back again to his treasure;
Leapt back again, full blest, toward arms spread wide to receive him.
Brimful of honour he clasped her, and brimful of love she caressed him,
Answering lip with lip; while above them the queen Aphrodité
Poured on their foreheads and limbs, unseen, ambrosial odours,
Givers of longing, and rapture, and chaste content in espousals."

Surely this poem, classical in subject, musical in recital, inspired with the joyousness of youth, trembling into passion such as Keats and Swinburne have loved to express, altogether reflecting so faithfully the spirit of that bright world of Greek fancy—surely it should place its author potentially beyond the rank to which, judged as a lyrist, he is usually assigned.

Of such well-known idylls as "Sands of Dee" and "The Three Fishers," with their simple homely pathos, it is superfluous to speak.

"Glaucus, or The Wonders of the Shore" represents his love of natural science. In June 1854, when all England was stirred by events in the Crimea, Kingsley took his wife to Bideford, and there he wrote "Westward Ho!" probably the most widely read of all his works. "The Heroes," a delightful version of three of the Greek myths, was written in the winter of 1855-6, at Farley Court. "Two Years Ago" came out in 1857, "Water Babies" in 1862.

His days were now crammed with work. Lecturing as Professor of Modern History at Cambridge;

practical co-operation with new sanitary reform associations; essays and reviews for the magazines; and a ceaseless correspondence, all in addition to his clerical duties, were enough to tax even his great strength.

In 1874 returning from an American tour, he took up with eager energy his new work at Westminster, where a canonry awaited him. His preaching in the old Abbey was powerful and impressive, and drew vast audiences. But a chill, caught in the damp air of a December night, coupled with the strain of over-work, brought on a fatal illness from which he never rallied. His death took place on the 23rd of January, 1875, under the old home-roof at Eversley.

If to the outside world his personality was commanding and attractive, it was even more so in his home-circle where he was the tenderest of fathers and the most chivalrous of husbands. On the bright animated peace of that home, where his own beautiful self-repression and large-hearted sympathy shone fairest, his since-published letters reverently lift the veil. He was but fifty-five when he died, but he had lived intensely.

With firm hard hand, with warm soft heart, Charles Kingsley was truly English, taking characteristically as his favourite motto "Be strong!" but choosing that over the last sleeping-place of himself and his loved one should be written "*Amavimus, Amamus, Amabimus.*"

HORACE G. GROSER.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

I.—AIRLY BEACON.

1847.

AIRLY Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
Oh the pleasant sight to see
Shires and towns from Airly Beacon,
While my love climbed up to me !

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
Oh the happy hours we lay
Deep in fern on Airly Beacon,
Courting through the summer's day !

Airly Beacon, Airly Beacon ;
Oh the weary haunt for me,
All alone on Airly Beacon,
With his baby on my knee !

II.—OH THAT WE TWO WERE MAYING.

(FROM "THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY," ACT II., SCENE IX.)

1848.

OH ! that we two were Maying
Down the stream of the soft spring breeze ;
Like children with violets playing
In the shade of the whispering trees !

Oh that we two sat dreaming
On the sward of some sheep-trimmed down
Watching the white mist steaming
Over river and mead and town !

Oh that we two lay sleeping,
In our nest in the churchyard sod,
With our limbs at rest on the quiet earth's breast,
And our souls at home with God !

III.—A LAMENT.

1848.

THE merry merry lark was up and singing,
And the hare was out and feeding on the lea ;
And the merry merry bells below were ringing,
When my child's laugh rang through me.

Now the hare is snared and dead beside the snow-yard
And the lark beside the dreary winter sea ;
And the baby in his cradle in the churchyard
Sleeps sound till the bell brings me.

IV.—THE SANDS OF DEC.

1849.

“ OH, Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dec.”

The western wind was wild and dark with foam,
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand
As far as eye could see.

The rolling mist came down and hid the land,
And never home came she.

“ Oh ! is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea ? ”

Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes of Dec.

They rowed her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel, crawling foam,
The cruel, hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea,
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee.

V.—THREE FISHERS WENT SAILING.

1851.

THREE fishers went sailing out into the West,
Away to the West as the sun went down ;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town :
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
And they trimm'd the lamps as the sun went down ;
And they looked at the squall, and they looked at the
shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown ;
But men must work, and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
And the harbour-bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands,
In the morning gleam, as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands,
For those who will never come home to the town.
For men must work, and women must weep,
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep,
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

VI.—ODE TO THE NORTH-EAST WIND.

1854.

WELCOME, wild North-easter !
Shame it is to see
Odes to every zephyr ;
Ne'er a verse to thee.
Welcome, black North-easter !
O'er the German foam ;
O'er the Danish moorlands,
From thy frozen home.
Tired we are of Summer,
Tired of gaudy glare,
Showers soft and steaming,
Hot and breathless air.
Tired of listless dreaming,
Through the lazy day :
Jovial wind of Winter
Turns us out to play !
Sweep the golden reed-beds ;
Crisp the lazy dyke ;
Hunger into madness
Every plunging pike.
Fill the lake with wild-fowl ;
Fill the marsh with snipe ;
While on dreary moorlands
Lonely curlew pipe.
Through the black fir-forest
Thunder harsh and dry,
Shattering down the snow-flakes
Off the curdled sky.

Hark ! the brave North-easter !
Breast-high lies the scent,
On by holt and headland,
Over heath and bent.
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
Through the sleet and snow.
Who can over-ride you ?
Let the horses go !
Chime, ye dappled darlings,
Down the roaring blast !
You shall see a fox die
Ere an hour be passed.
Go ! and rest to-morrow,
Hunting in your dreams,
While our skates are ringing
O'er the frozen streams.
Let the luscious South-wind
Breathe in lovers' sighs,
While the lazy gallants
Bask in ladies' eyes.
What does he but soften
Heart alike and pen ?
'Tis the hard grey weather
Breeds hard English men.
What's the soft South-wester ?
'Tis the ladies' breeze,
Bringing home their true-loves
Out of all the seas.
But the black North-easter,
Through the snowstorm hurled,
Drives our English hearts of oak
Seaward round the world.
Come, as came our fathers,
Heralded by thee,

Conquering from the eastward,
Lords by land and sea.
Come ; and strong within us
Stir the Vikings' blood ;
Bracing brain and sinew ;
Blow, thou wind of God !

VII.—A FAREWELL.

TO C. E. G.

1856.

MY fairest child, I have no song to give you ;
No lark could pipe in skies so dull and gray ;
Yet, if you will, one quiet hint I'll leave you,
For every day.

I'll tell you how to sing a clearer carol
Than lark who hails the dawn or breezy down ;
To earn yourself a purer poet's laurel
Than Shakespeare's crown.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who can be clever ;
Do lovely things, not dream them, all day long ;
And so make Life, and Death, and that For Ever,
One grand sweet song.

VIII.—THE LAST BUCCANEER.

1857.

OH England is a pleasant place for them that's
rich and high,
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I ;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again
As the pleasant Isle of Avès beside the Spanish main.

There were forty craft in Avès that were both swift
and stout,
All furnished well with small arms and cannons
round about ;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair and
free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them
loyally.

Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his
hoards of plate and gold,
Which he rung with cruel tortures from Indian folk
of old ;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard
as stone,
Who flog men and keel-haul them, and starve them
to the bone.

Oh the palms grew high in Avès, and fruits that
shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to
behold ;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast did
flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from
sea.

Oh sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward
breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the
trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to
the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never
touched the shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things
must be;
So the King's ships sailed on Avès, and quite put
down were we.
All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the
booms at night;
And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the
fight.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing
she died;
But as I lay a gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg until
I die.

And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell
where;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be
worse off there:
If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again.

Ebenezer Jones.

1820—1860.

EBENEZER JONES was born in Canonbury Square, Islington, a suburb of London, on January 20th, 1820. One of a family of six, a brother and a sister older, and a brother and two sisters younger, than himself, all born within eleven years, the parents in competent circumstances, the surroundings of his childhood and boyhood so far were favourable. But both parents belonging, with all their immediate connections, to a very strict sect of Calvinist Dissenters, their chief aim as regarded their children was to sedulously train them on a narrow path through what was termed the "wilderness of this world," from any knowledge of which they were thus excluded until, by the force of events, precipitated into it early in life, at a most grievous disadvantage.

So much is told us by Ebenezer's elder brother, who adds—"The young mind of my brother, 'finely touched' from childhood, but wholly unappreciated by all who could influence his future career in life, was dictated at home (we were a bookish family) alternately on books in which 'useful knowledge' was framed in a setting of religious tags, books of solid doctrinal divinity, and, worst of all, books of overwrought 'spiritual' experience and hysterical evangelism; while the Bible and a compilation of short Questions and long Answers, called the

Assembly's Catechism, dreaded by us, were in constant use to fill up all gaps. Dr. Watts and Kirke White were permitted on our Parnassus; but Shakespeare and even Milton were kept in rigorous quarantine. Of Byron we had a mysterious notion, gathered from hearing our elders now and then speak of him shudderingly, as of some satanic spirit who had been permitted visibly to stalk abroad. Of Shelley we had never heard. Card-playing and dancing were denounced, and those who indulged in them were looked upon as doomed. Schools, private schools, were selected less for educational advantages than because they were conducted by ministers of the same iron Calvinist creed, the tenets of which were a terror to us in our youth. All this was otherwise carried out with pious intention, aided by flagellation, to an extreme at which I do but hint here, but which, when the inevitable day of revolt arrived, resulted in the opposite extreme. The result of such collision of extremes may, I think, be traced in some of my brother's poems. In a first book of verse it would indeed have been marked, save for his very studious habit of self-culture so far as he had opportunity after school days had elapsed."

Such was the untoward training of a young, naturally joyous, and most passionate nature, a nature likely to be only tempted to rebellion by the unwise restraint. How passionate his nature was is shown by an incident of his early boyhood.

On a hot summer afternoon, some fifty boys were listlessly conning their tasks in a large schoolroom, presided over by a Dissenting minister, the Rev. John Bickerdike. Up the ladder-like stairs from

the playground a lurcher dog, panting with heat, his tongue lolling out with thirst, strayed into the room. Seen by the usher in charge, he, angry at the boys' attention being diverted from their tasks, dragged the dog to the top of the stairs, and there lifted him with the evident intention (he had been known to do cruel things) of hurling the poor beast to the bottom. "*You shall not!*" rang through the room as little Ebby, exclaiming at the top of his voice, rushed with kindling face to the spot from the midst of the boys, some twice his age. But even while he spoke the heavy fall was heard, and the sound seemed to travel through him as, with a look of anguish, strange in one so young, he stood still, threw up his arms, and burst into an uncontrollable passion of tears. The usher led him back by his car, and he sat, long after his sobbing had subsided, like one dazed and stunned.

In continuance of this crippling process and soul-confinement he had, owing to misfortunes in the family, to go into trade, and in 1837, at the age of seventeen, to take a clerkship in a City house, in Mincing Lane. The family went into Wales, leaving the two elder sons, Sumner and Ebenezer, together in London to care for themselves. Their hours of business were from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. daily, except Sundays, exclusive of time for going to and returning from the office. Saturday half-holidays had not then been invented. Plea made for a margin of time for self-culture was met by this rejoinder—that self-culture led to pride of intellect, "one of Satan's peculiar snares," and was not wanted in the counting-house. Well was it that, after the narrowness of home and the schooling

which had taught nothing well, there had been some interposition of new ideas.

Even as a boy at fourteen he had begun his apprenticeship to verse, but the first outer light across the gloom appears to have come from Carlyle. Some friend had lent him the "French Revolution," and that had following in "Sartor Resartus," and "Shelley's Poems." So a new life awoke in him. Other books were eagerly sought and obtained; the desire of the creative took possession of him, and he set himself vigorously to composition, both verse and prose. Among his early prose endeavours, now not existing, showing the tendency of his thought, was one of "My Relations to the Universe in so far as I seem to have Present Discernment of them." Another, read before some Association which he had joined, was "On the Nature and Office of Poetry." Songs and sonnets were not wanting, and there was a poem on "Slavery," with an invocation to the spirit of Washington. It was the high tide of the Chartist movement, a movement which not only attracted the mass of the working classes, but drew into its wake a very considerable number of young enthusiasts of a higher social position. Ebenezer Jones sympathized strongly with the movement, his ideal of Republicanism carrying him yet farther; and though he was never a member of any Chartist association, nor took part in any public meeting (his absolute enthrallment by his clerky duties being sufficient prevention for that) he agreed with the principles and shared the hopes of the party, some of his closest friends holding the same views, some active in their assertion.

In the September number of *Tait's Magazine*, 1838, appeared the "Ode to Thought." The poet's work was fairly begun. Though only on Sundays and at night after returning with his brother to their lodging in the Old Kent Road, he found time for verse-writing, not without first arranging that Fool, named after the Fool in *King Lear*, and who was the friend and companion of the brothers, should "*have his scamper*," and during the next four years wrote enough to fill a handsome volume, paid for with his own earnings, published by Charles Fox, Paternoster Row, in 1843—"Studies of Sensation and Event." "The tide of passionate strength in certain pages (again referring to a friendly critic) flowed into them direct from the life of the writer. As his poems, so was he in speech and act: impetuous yet inflexible, imaginative yet incisive, now with tender and even childlike simplicity pleading against "slander of my beautiful world," now carolling a "Song to a Rose," now picturing a leader of revolt (such as he could himself have been) in lines of startling force, and anon telling us, in a little poem that begins like the first droppings of a shower, how he loves 'Rain.'"

The venture was a failure and a disappointment. W. J. Fox (the eloquent and generous critic), R. H. Horne (the author of "Orion"), Barry Cornwall, and some few others—some poets themselves—gave voice to their appreciation; but the critics and the public passed by. Had they not passed by the works of Wells, and Hood, and Reynolds, and Wade, and Nicoll? Jones's self-respect forbade him to complain, and his fortitude refused commiseration, but (always a man of impulse) he

destroyed the poems he had in readiness for a second volume, and turned his attention to the prose of politics, writing in some of the unstamped newspapers that gave such effectual help in obtaining the freedom of the Press. A pamphlet on the "Condition of England Question" seems to be lost. Another, very able, "The Land Monopoly, the Suffering and Demoralization caused by it, and the Justice and the Expediency of its Abolition," was published in 1849. But he could not entirely escape the poetic fervour: and some of a few later verses, brought together by Richard Herne Shepherd, as an appendix to a reprint in 1879 of nearly the whole of the "Studies of Sensation and Event," give promise of riper fruit had he not forsaken the old-time haunts.

But the hard unintermitted struggle with adverse economical circumstances and the unhappiness resulting from a too hasty marriage—though bravely and nobly met—were never to be overcome. Consumption came to make an end. In or about 1856, still at the office work, he took lodgings at Poulton's Square, Chelsea, partly for the sake of nearness to Carlyle, whom he would see in his walks, but on whom he never called, shrinking sensitively lest after his failure Carlyle, who had written to him soon after the publication of the "Studies," should ask him what he had *done*; and partly for love of the old place, the bridge, and the river. After he became too ill to take long walks, he would steal out before bedtime and loiter on the bridge, watching the effects of light and shade, and listening to the water swaying and gurgling among the wooden piles. Toward the close of his life, unable to reach the City, his

brother would bring him little commissions for a kind of writing at which he was an expert, and that could be done at home ; and one day, off his guard, remarking it was but "sad work for a poet," the poet looked up brightly to him and gently repeated the closing words of "Pippa Passes"—

"All service is the same with God,—
Whose puppets, best and worst, are we."

He died on September 14th, 1860, in the house of a relative at Brentwood, Essex, and was buried in the rural churchyard of Shenfield.

His own estimate of his works, modest yet confident, and something of the man himself, may be found in part of a letter written to William Bell Scott, the artist-poet.

"Touching your remarks on 'Studies of Sensation and Event,' I think they are true ; and your qualification of the poems as being true perceptions, 'but seen through certain partial conditions of the percipient, very fairly suggests the question whether the condition of the percipient was a condition during which works of art should be undertaken. (Not that I think the poems, except one or two lyrics, worthy of the name of works of art, being so devoid of construction, or constructed with unrecognized material, empty of definiteness of purpose or unity of representation.) I suppose I need not say that the condition of the percipient generally was dissatisfaction backed by determination never to hold one's peace."

Of his poetry the present writer would sum up with this. If it must be allowed, that, there is more of promise than of fulfilment, it may still be

affirmed that there are abundant indications of high purpose, of original thought, and passages of melody and power sufficient to stamp the writer as a man of genius. The work is indeed young, and being young, too often crude; but it is earnest, hearty, and vigorous even when not satisfactory in form; and the weaknesses and faults which might be picked out by a vigorous critic are those of immaturity. The want only of such ripeness as might, and surely would, have come with growth. The beginnings of powers are evident. The delight in natural beauty is a mark of the true poet, and even the more sensational writing, if too exuberant, is not unhealthy. A worshipper of beauty, sensitive, pleasure loving, impassioned, his erotic verse was as much the effluence of his blood as of his brain, and easily moved to love, he could not help but sing, as the buds must open in the spring sunshine. His ambition was to write poetry; his nature swayed to that as the tree sways with the wind, the continual sea wind that drives all growth in one direction. He put aside poetry for prose, because, before all, his ambition was to be a man. Truly he was a man capable of much, beside poetry. Sensations of the keenest, whence quick impulse, clear insight as to right and wrong, from which arose his indignation against injustice; fearlessness and fortitude, and with them tenderness; the poetic gift with, at the same time, the practical talent, and good sense of a man of the world: all these belonged to Ebenezer Jones; and despite all failure and neglect he has earned a place in the roll of poets.

WILLIAM J. LINTON.

STUDIES OF SENSATION AND EVENT.

1843.

EBENEZER JONES.

I.—THE HAND.

L ONE o'er the moors I stray'd ;
With basely timid mind,
Because by some betray'd,
Denouncing human-kind ;
I heard the lonely wind,
And wickedly did mourn
I could not share its loneliness,
And all things human scorn.

And bitter were the tears
I cursed as they fell ;
And bitterer the sneers
I strove not to repel :
With blindly mutter'd yell,
I cried unto mine heart,—
“Thou shalt beat the world in falsehood,
And stab it ere we part.”

My hand I backward drave
As one who seeks a knife ;
When startingly did crave
To quell that hand's wild strife
Some other hand ; all rife
With kindness, clasp'd it hard
On mine, quick frequent claspings
That would not be debarr'd.

I dared not turn my gaze
To the creature of the hand ;
And no sound did it raise,
Its nature to disband
Of mystery ; vast, and grand,
The moors around me spread,
And I thought, some angel message
Perchance their God may have sped.

But it press'd another press,
So full of earnest prayer,
While o'er it fell a tress
Of cool, soft, human hair,
I fear'd not ;—I did dare
Turn round, 'twas Hannah there !
Oh ! to no one out of heaven
Could I what pass'd declare.

We wander'd o'er the moor
Through all that blessed day ;
And we drank its waters pure,
And felt the world away ;
In many a dell we lay,
And we twined flower-crowns bright ;
And I fed her with moor-berries
And bless'd her glad eye-light.

And still that earnest pray-er
That saved me many stings,
Was oft a silent sayer
Of countless loving things ;—
I'll ring it all with rings,
Each ring a jewell'd band ;
For heaven shouldn't purchase
That little sister hand.

● II.—RAIN.

MORE than the wind, more than the snow,
More than the sunshine, I love rain ;
Whether it droppeth soft and low,
Whether it rusheth amain.
Dark as the night it spreadeth its wings,
Slow and silently up on the hills ;
Then sweeps o'er the vale, like a steed that springs
From the grasp of a thousand wills.
Swift sweeps under heaven the raven cloud's flight ;
And the land and the lakes and the main
Lie belted beneath with steel-bright light,
The light of the swift-rushing rain.
On evenings of summer, when sunlight is low,
Soft the rain falls from opal-hued skies ;
And the flowers the most delicate summer can show
Are not stirr'd by its gentle surprise.
It falls on the pools, and no wrinkling it makes,
But touching melts in, like the smile
That sinks in the face of a dreamer, but breaks
Not the calm of his dream's happy wile.
The grass rises up as it falls on the meads,
The bird softer sings in his bower,
And the circles of gnats circle on like wing'd seeds
Through the soft sunny lines of the shower.

III.—THE FACE.

THESE dreary hours of hopeless gloom
Are all of life I fain would know ;
I would but feel my life consume,
While bring they back mine ancient woe ;
For midst the clouds of grief and shame
They crowd around, one face I see ;
It is the face I dare not name ;
The face none ever name to me.

I saw it first when in the dance
Borne, like a falcon, down the hall,
He stay'd to cure some rude mischance
My girlish deed had caused to fall ;
He smiled, he danced with me, he made
A thousand ways to soothe my pain ;
And sleeplessly all night I pray'd
That I might see that smile again.

I saw it next, a thousand times ;
And every time its kind smile near'd ;
Oh ! twice ten thousand glorious chimes
My heart rang out, when he appear'd ;
What was I then, that others' thought
Could alter so my thought of him !
That I could be by others taught
His image from my heart to dim !

I saw it last, when black and white,
Shadows went struggling o'er it wild ;
When he regain'd my long-lost sight,
And I with cold obeisance smiled ;—
I did not see it fade from life ;
My letters o'er his heart they found ;
They told me in death's last hard strife
His dying hands around them wound.

Although my scorn that face did maim,
Even when its love would not depart,
Although my laughter smote its shame,
And drave it swording through his heart,
Although its death-gloom grasps my brain
With crushing unrefused despair ;—
That I may dream that face again
God still must find alone my prayer.

STUDIES OF RESEMBLANCE AND CONSENT.

1879.

EBENEZER JONES.

I.—WHEN THE WORLD IS BURNING.

(STANZAS FOR MUSIC.)

WHEN the world is burning,
Fired within, yet turning
Round with face unscathed ;
Ere fierce flames, uprushing,
O'er all lands leap, crushing,
Till earth fall, fire-swathed ;
Up amidst the meadows,
Gently through the shadows,
Gentle flames will glide,
Small, and blue, and golden.
Though by bard beholden,
When in calm dreams folden,—
Calm his dreams will bide.

Where the dance is sweeping,
Through the greensward peeping,
Shall the soft lights start ;
Laughing maids, unstaying,
Deeming it trick-playing,
High their robes upswaying,
O'er the lights shall dart ;
And the woodland haunter,
Shall not cease to saunter
When, far down some glade,
Of the great world's burning,
One soft flame upturning
Seems, to his discerning,
Crocus in the shade.

*II.—MY WIFE AND CHILD, COME CLOSE
TO ME.*

MY wife and child, come close to me,
The world to us is a stormy sea:
With your hands in mine, if your eyes but shine,
I care not how wild the storm may be.

For the fiercest wind that ever blew
Is nothing to me, so I shelter you;
No warmth do I lack, for the howl at my back
Sings down to my heart, "Man bold and true!"

A pleasant sail, my child, my wife,
O'er a pleasant sea, to many is life;
The wind blows warm, and they dread no storm,
And wherever they go, kind friends are rife.

But, wife and child, the love, the love
That lifteth us to the saints above,
Could only have grown where storms have blown
The truth and strength of the heart to prove.

III.—A WINTER HYMN TO THE SNOW.

COME o'er the hills, and pass unto the wold,
And all things, as thou passest, in rest upfold,
Nor all night long thy ministrations cease;
Thou succourer of young corn, and of each seed
In plough'd land sown, or lost on rooted mead,
And bringer everywhere of exceeding peace!

Beneath the long interminable frost
Earth's landscapes all their excellent force have lost,
And stripp'd and abject each alike appears;

Not now to adore can they exalt the soul,—
Panic, or anger, or unrest control,—
Or aid the loosening of Affliction's tears.

No more doth Desolateness lovely sit
Lone on the moor; no more around her flit
From far high-travelling heaven the sailing shades;
The shrunk grass shivers feebly; reed and sedge,
By frozen marsh, by rivulet's iron edge,
Bow, blent into ice, mix'd stems and blades.

The mountains soar not, holding high in heaven
Their mighty kingdoms, but all downward driven
Seem shrunk haggard ridges running low;
And all about stand drear upon the leas,
Like giant thorns, the frozen skeleton trees,
Dead to the winds that ruining through them go.

The woodland rattles in the sudden gusts;
Frozen through frozen brakes the river thrusts
His arm forth stiffly, like one slain and cold;
The glory from the horizon-line has fled;
One sullen formless gloom the skies are spread,
And black the waters of the lakes are roll'd.

Come! Daughter fair of Sire the sternest, come,
And bring the world relief! to rivers numb
Give garments, cover broadly the broad land;
All trees with thy resistless gentleness
Assume, and in thine own white vesture dress,
And hush all nooks with thy persistings bland.

Come! making rugged gorge and rocky height
Even more than fur of ermine soft and white,
And cover up and silence roads and lanes;

And, while the ravish'd wind sleeps hush'd and still,
Wreaths, little infancy with glee to fill,
Upheap at doorways and at casement-panes.

Fancy's most potent pandar ! gentlest too :
Man, rising on the morn, the scene will view
Thus, all transform'd, with no less sweet surprise
Than stirreth him to whose half-doubting sight
Sudden appears beloved friend, masqued bright
In not less fair than unexpected guise.

And some will think the earth, in white robes drest,
Seems sinking fast in a great trance of rest,
Beyond all further reach of wintry ill ;
And some will say it seems as though a ghost
Appear'd ; and thus, on fancy's seas far toss'd,
With doubtful shadowy joys their spirits fill.

Thy task complete, if to the amazing scene
With Night should come, full orb'd, Night's radiant Queen,
How the whole race from out their homes will gaze !
Hard hearts will restless grow, and mean men sigh,
And wish they could be holier, and on high
Some, whispering words of heaven, meek thanks
will raise.

I, sweet celestial kisser ! from croft home-crown'd,
From ancient mead by stateliest trees girt round,
From wilds where thou the earth lovest all alone,
Shall watch thee shower thy kisses, and all the hours
Rapt worship solemnize, and bless the Powers
That let thy loveliness to my soul be known !

IV.—TO DEATH.

June 10, 1860.

I SEE thee in the churchyard, Death,
And fain would talk with thee,
While still I draw the young man's breath
And still with clear eyes see.

Thou wilt not make my spirit sink,
Thou dost not move my fear ;
More sad, more blest I often think
The mortal sojourner here.

Here where the symbols all of fair
With vileness mix'd we find ;
Where knowledge soothes not, and where care
Haunts most the finest mind.

'Tis thou who know'st if any knows
Of life's wild maze the key ;
And if behind its marvellous shows
Some Master moving be.

And haply of some farther life
That shall this life adjust,
Or if we are men for threescore years,
And then unconscious dust.

For this, oh Death, of thee I crave
Some sign ; but not to pray
Against the inevitable grave
Or self-contain'd decay.

Alas ! since first our fragile race
Appear'd this earth upon,
Hast thou been question'd thus, and trace
Of answer never won.

In vain the young from youth's delights,
From lips whose kissing bloom
Bright chaos makes of days and nights,
To thee defiant come.

In vain the old with trembling tread
And trembling hands applies,
And strives to coax thy silence dread,
And lifts beseeching eyes.

And vainly I desert my post
In life's poor puppet game,
And seek thee where this silent host
Of tombs thy power proclaim.

When midnight wraps the world in sleep,
Or when the vanishing stars
And morn once more, new day to keep,
Rolls back her golden bars.

In vain, in vain, but one reply
In thy sad realm I find ;
Some fresh grave ever meets the eye,
And mocks the unanswer'd mind.

William Cox Bennett.

1820.

WILLIAM COX BENNETT was born at Greenwich, on the 14th of October, 1820. His father, John Bennett, was a watchmaker, and his brother John afterwards became sheriff of London and received the honour of knighthood. Losing his father while still a boy the poet was early introduced to business life, which he pursued with energy and industry. These qualities were also associated with considerable public spirit, leading him to take an active part in the organisation and reform of local institutions. His first volume of verse appeared in 1843, and his second in 1845, both of these being printed for private circulation. Occasional contributions to periodical publications followed, and he became connected with the *Weekly Dispatch*, the London *Figaro*, and other papers. His works include "Poems," 1850; "Verdicts," 1852; "War Songs," 1855; "Queen Eleanor's Vengeance, and other Poems," 1857; "Songs by a Song Writer," 1859; "Baby May, and other Poems on Infants," 1861; a collected edition of his "Poems" in Routledge's "British Poets," 1862; "The Politics of the People," 1865; "Our Glory Roll, and other National Poems," 1866; "Proposals for and Contributions to a Ballad History of England," 1868; "Songs for Sailors," 1872; "Prometheus the Fire Giver," an attempted restoration of the lost first

part of the Promethean Trilogy of Æschylus, 1877; "Sea Songs," 1878; and "Songs for Sailors," set to music by J. L. Hatton, in 1878. His verse is characterised by hearty English sense and feeling. There is no obscurity of style to pass for profundity of thought, but all is written for the people in a manner easily to be understood. His work shows a clear eye for the beauty that surrounds common life, and a sympathetic heart for those who often miss it in the stress of toil and suffering. "Baby May," one of his most popular pieces, is one of the best of baby poems. "From India," if not very new in point of subject or treatment, shows dramatic power, while many a song that *will* sing testifies to the genuineness of his lyric gift. It is these songs and ballads which express the honest emotions of simple hearts, that give him his place in the literature of his time.

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS AND SONGS.

WILLIAM COX BENNETT.

I.—BABY MAY.

CHEEKS as soft as July peaches ;
Lips whose dewy scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness ; round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise.
Minutes fill'd with shadeless gladness,
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness,
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes.
Lights and shadows swifter born
Than on windswept autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion,
Making every limb all motion,
Catchings up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under.
Tiny scorns of smiled reprovings
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness that we prize such sinning.
Breakings dire of plates and glasses,

Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that's able
To be caught from tray or table.
Silences—small meditations
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations,
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing,
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings
That we'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we'd always have thee waking.
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care—delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be,
That's May Bennett—that's my baby.

II.—THE BOAT-RACE.

“THERE, win the cup, and you shall have my girl.
I won it, Ned; and you shall win it too,
Or wait a twelvemonth. Books—for ever books!
Nothing but talk of poets and their rhymes!
I'd have you, boy, a man, with thews and strength
To breast the world with, and to cleave your way,
No maudlin dreamer, that will need her care,
She needing yours. There—there—I love you, Ned
Both for your own and for your mother's sake:
So win our boat-race, and the cup, next month,

And you shall have her." With a broad loud laugh,
A jolly triumph at his rare conceit,
He left the subject; and, across the wine,
We talked,—or rather, all the talk was his,—
Of the best oarsmen that his youth had known,
Both of his set, and others—Clare, the boast
Of Jesus',—and young Edmunds, he who fell,
Cleaving the ranks of Lucknow; and, to-day
There was young Chester might be named with them;
"Why, boy, I'm told his room is lit with cups
Won by his skulls. Ned, if he rows he wins;
Small chance for you, boy!" And again his laugh,
With its broad thunder, turn'd my thoughts to gall;
But yet I mask'd my humour with a mirth
Moulded on his; and, feigning haste, I went,
But left not. Through the garden porch I turned,
But, on its sun-fleck'd seats, its jessamine shades
Trembled on no one. Down the garden's paths
Wander'd my eye, in rapid quest of one
Sweeter than all its roses, and across
Its gleaming lilies and its azure bells,
There in the orchard's greenness, down beyond
Its sweetbriar hedgerow, found her—found her there,
A summer blossom that the peering sun
Peep'd at through blossoms,—that the summer airs,
Waver'd down blossoms on, and amorous gold
Warm as that rain'd on Danaë. With a step,
Soft as the sun-light, down the pebbled path
I pass'd; and, ere her eye could cease to count
The orchard daisies, in some summer mood
Dreaming (was I her thought?), my murmur'd "Kate"
Shock'd up the tell-tale roses to her cheek,
And lit her eyes with starry lights of love
That dimm'd the daylight. Then I told her all,

And told her that her father's jovial jest
Should make her mine, and kissed her sunlit tears
Away, and all her little trembling doubts,
Until hope won her heart to happy dreams,
And all the future smiled with happy love.
Nor, till the still moon, in the purpling east,
Gleam'd through the twilight, did we stay our talk,
Or part, with kisses, looks, and whispered words
Remember'd for a lifetime. Home I went,
And in my College rooms what blissful hopes
Were mine!—what thoughts, that still'd to happy
dreams,
Where Kate, the fadeless summer of my life,
Made my years Eden, and lit up my home,
(The ivied rectory my sleep made mine,)
With little faces, and the gleams of curls,
And baby crows, and voices twin to hers.
O happy night! O more than happy dreams!
But with the earliest twitter from the eaves,
I rose, and, in an hour, at Clifford's yard,
As if but boating were the crown of life,
Forgetting Tennyson, and books, and rhymes,
Even my new tragedy upon the stocks,
I throng'd my brain with talks of lines and curves,
And all that makes a wherry sure to win,
And furbish'd up the knowledge that I had,
Ere study put my boyhood's feats away,
And made me book-worm; all that day my hand
Grew more and more familiar with the oar,
And won by slow degrees, as reach by reach
Of the green river lengthen'd on my sight,
Its by-laid cunning back; so, day by day,
From when dawn touched our elm-tops, till the moon
Gleam'd through the slumbrous leafage of our lawns,

I flash'd the flowing Isis from my oars
And dream'd of triumph and the prize to come,
And breathed myself, in sport, one after one,
Against the men with whom I was to row,
Until I fear'd but Chester—him alone.
So June stole on to July, sun by sun,
And the day came ; how well I mind that day !
Glorious with summer, not a cloud abroad
To dim the golden greenness of the fields,
And all a happy hush about the earth,
And not a hum to stir the drowsy noon,
Save where along the peopled towing-paths,
Banking the river, swarmed the city out,
Loud of the contest, bright as humming-birds,
Two winding rainbows by the river's brinks,
That flush'd with boats and barges, silken-awn'd.
Shading the fluttering beauties of our balls,
Our College toasts, and gay with jest and laugh,
Bright as their champagne. One, among them all,
My eye saw only ; one, that morning, left
With smiles that hid the terrors of my heart,
And spoke of certain hope, and mock'd at fears—
One, that upon my neck had parting hung
Arms white as daisies—on my bosom hid
A tearful face that sobb'd against my heart,
Fill'd with what fondness ! yearning with what love !
O hope, and would the glad day make her mine ?
O hope, was hope a prophet, truth alone ?
There was a murmur in my heart of " Yes,"
That sung to slumber every wakening fear
That still would stir and shake me with its dread.
And now a hush was on the wavering crowd
That sway'd along the river, reach by reach
A grassy mile, to where we were to turn—

A barge moor'd mid-stream, flush'd with fluttering flags.
And we were ranged, and, at the gun we went,
As in a horse-race, all, at first, a-crowd ;
Then, thinning slowly, one by one dropt off,
Till, rounding the moor'd mark, Chester and I
Left the last lingerer with us lengths astern,
The victory hopeless. Then I knew the strife
Was come, and hoped 'gainst fear, and, oar to oar,
Strained to the work before me. Head to head
Through the wild-cheering river-banks we clove
The swarming waters, raining streams of toil ;
But Chester gain'd, so much his tutor'd strength
Held on, enduring,—mine still waning more,
And parting with the victory, inch by inch,
Yet straining on, as if I strove with death,
Until I groan'd with anguish. Chester heard,
And turn'd a wondering face upon me quick,
And toss'd a laugh across, with jesting words :
“ What, Ned, my boy, and do you take it so ?
The cup's not worth the moaning of a man,
No, nor the triumph. Tush ! boy, I *must* win.”
Then from the anguish of my heart a cry
Burst : “ Kate, O, dearest Kate—O love—we lose ! ”
“ Ah ! I've a Kate, too, here to see me win.”
He answered : “ Faith, my boy, I pity you.”
“ Oh, if you lose,” I answered, “ you but lose
A week's wild triumph, and its praise and pride ;
I, losing, lose what priceless years of joy !
Perchance a life's whole sum of happiness—
What years with her that I might call my wife !
Winning, I win her ! ” O thrice noble heart !
I saw the mocking laugh fade from his face ;
I saw a nobler light light up his eyes ;
I saw the flush of pride die into one

Of manly tenderness and sharp resolve ;
No word he spoke ; one only look he threw,
That told me all ; and, ere my heart could leap
In prayers and blessings rain'd upon his name,
I was before him, through the tracking eyes
Of following thousands, heading to the goal,
The shouting goal, that hurl'd my conquering name
Miles wide in triumph, "Chester foil'd at last !"
O how I turned to him ! with what a heart !
Unheard the shouts—unseen the crowding gaze
That ring'd us. How I wrung his answering hand
With grasps that bless'd him, and with flush that told
I shamed to hear my name more loud than his,
And spurn'd its triumph. So I won my wife,
My own dear wife ; and so I won a friend,
Chester, more dear than all but only her,
And these, the small ones of my College dreams.

III.—FROM INDIA.

"O COME you from the Indies, and, soldier, can you tell
Aught of the gallant goth, and who are safe and well ?
O soldier, say my son is safe—for nothing else I care,
And you shall have a mother's thanks—shall have a widow's
prayer."

"O I've come from the Indies—I've just come from the war ;
And well I know the goth, and gallant lads they are ;
From colonel down to rank and file, I know my comrades
well,
And news I've brought for you, mother, your Robert bade
me tell."

“And do you know my Robert, now? O tell me, tell me true,
O soldier, tell me word for word all that he said to you!
His very words—my own boy’s words—O tell me every one!
You little know how dear to his old mother is my son.”

“Through Havelock’s fights and marches the 90th were there;
In all the gallant 90th did, your Robert did his share;
Twice he went into Lucknow untouch’d by steel or ball,
And you may bless your God, old dame, that brought him safe through all.”

“O thanks unto the living God that heard his mother’s prayer,
The widow’s cry that rose on high her only son to spare!
O blessed be God, that turn’d from him the sword and shot away!
And what to his old mother did my darling bid you say?”

“Mother, he saved his colonel’s life, and bravely it was done;
In the despatch they told it all, and named and praised your son;
A medal and a pension’s his; good luck to him, I say,
And he has not a comrade but will wish him well to-day.”

“Now, soldier, blessings on your tongue; O husband, that you knew
How well our boy pays me this day for all that I’ve gone through,
All I have done and borne for him the long years since you’re dead!
But, soldier, tell me how he look’d, and all my Robert said.”

"He's bronzed and tann'd, and bearded, and you'd hardly know him, dame,
We've made your boy into a man, but still his heart's the same :

For often, dame, his talk's of you, and always to one tune,
But there, his ship is nearly home, and he'll be with you soon."

"O is he really coming home, and shall I really see
My boy again, my own boy, home? and when, when will it be?

Did you say soon?" "Well, he is home; keep cool, old dame; he's here."

"O Robert, my own blessèd boy!"—"O mother—mother dear!"

IV.—THE CAVALIER'S WHISPER.

'TIS a cloudless noon of sultry June,
And pleasant it is to win
The cool thick shade by the chestnut made,
In front of the wayside inn;
And a pleasant sight, with his feather of white,
Is the mounted Cavalier,
Who stoops for the cup that the maid gives up,
With a word none else can hear.

A moment more—from that shady door
That horseman rides away;
And little, I guess, he thinks—and less
Of the word he bent to say;
But many a noon of many a June
Must pass, with many a year,
Ere the maiden who heard that whispered word,
Forgets that Cavalier.

V.—A WIFE'S SONG.

O WELL I love the Spring,
 When the sweet, sweet hawthorn blows ;
 And well I love the Summer,
 And the coming of the rose ;
 But dearer are the changing leaf,
 And the year upon the wane,
 For O, they bring the blessed time
 That brings him home again.

November may be dreary,
 December's days may be
 As full of gloom to others
 As once they were to me ;
 But O, to hear the tempest
 Beat loud against the pane !
 For the roaring wind and the blessed time
 That brings him home again.

Frederick Locker-Lampson.

1821.

MR. FREDERICK LOCKER,—for by this name his old admirers continue to call him,—was born in 1821, his father being a Civil Commissioner of Greenwich Hospital, a warm patron of art and letters, and a naval biographer of distinction. His grandfather, Captain W. Locker, R.N., was the friend of Nelson, who served under him, and from him received the invaluable injunction, “Lay a Frenchman close, and you will beat him.” Mr. Locker began life as a clerk and précis writer in the Admiralty, from which post he afterwards retired. He has been married twice; and it is in connection with his second marriage that he added to his surname that of his father-in-law, the late Sir Curtis Lampson. Of Mr. Locker’s personal characteristics, it is needless to do more than note what is already public property. That he is a finished *raconteur* is plain from his volume entitled “Patchwork” (1879), one of the most delightful miscellanies of choice quotation, fresh criticism, and unhackneyed anecdote which has ever been put together; that he is a connoisseur and collector having

“—a love that is not sham
For Stothard, Blake, and Lamb,”

his own verses acquaint us. As for his treasures as a book-lover, his manuscripts and autograph letters,

are they not written in that rarest of *Catalogues raisonnés*—*The Rowfant Library*, of which Mr. Andrew Lang has sung the praises?—

“Happy, who rich in toys like these
Forgets a weary nation’s ills,
Who from his study window sees
The circle of the Sussex hills.”

Among those who console themselves for the success of the “lighter lyre” by reducing its rank as poetry, Mr. Locker is sometimes regarded as the representative society-verse writer,—the disciple upon whom, in our day, the mantle of Praed has fallen. But he is much more, as it seems to us than the merely brilliant rhymers of

“The ice of her Ladyship’s manners,
The ice of his Lordship’s champagne.”

It is true that in such pieces as “Rotten Row,” “St. James’s Street,” “At Hurlingham,” and half-a-dozen others, he has written society-verse with an aptitude for which his opportunities and his experience especially qualify him. But the majority of his pieces are less verses of society than verses of humanity,—they are concerned more with the world at large than the world of the *Court Journal*. Often they have turns and cadences which lift them far above the purely playful or humorous level at which they are conventionally supposed to remain. Where in Praed, for example, do we find the mingled melody and melancholy of—

“Ah, minstrel, how strange is
The carol you sing!
Let Psyche, who ranges
The garden of Spring,
Remember the changes
December will bring”?

where such a quaint and Quarles-like conceit as—

“And, like yon clock,—when twelve shall sound,
To call our souls away,
Together may our hands be found,
An earnest that we pray”?

or where the delicate archness, the delightful gallantry of the following quatrain from “Gerty’s Glove”—

“You fingers four, you little thumb!
Were I but you, in days to come
I’d clasp, and kiss, and keep her,—go!
And tell her that I told you so”?

The truth is that, under the reputation of a versewriter, Mr. Locker conceals a very genuine and highly cultivated poetic gift; and his admitted popularity is due in reality rather to his possession of this quality than to any successful perpetuation on his part of the themes or traditions of *Praed*. The “poems” in his book are much more numerous than the “verses.” “At Her Window” is simply one of the most beautiful love-songs of the century; and, as long as it is not thought necessary to class the “Talking Oak” and the “Day Dream” of the laureate among *vers de société*, there would seem to be no sufficient reason why such of Mr. Locker’s efforts as “My Neighbour Rose,” “A Garden Lyric,” “A Human Skull,” “The Old Oak-Tree at Hatfield Broad Oak,” “An Invitation to Rome and the Reply,” should be denied their places in the inner poetic circle. Nor can this right be refused to the charming group of half-reflective, half-regretful pieces of which “It might have been,” “My Song,” “Any Poet to his Love,” “The Cuckoo,” “The Unrealised Ideal,” may be cited as specimens. And Mr. Locker has one other string which he

touches unfalteringly. In his verses to "Lina Oswald," to "Little Dinky," and in those called "A Rhyme of One" he achieves with triumph the difficult feat of writing charmingly of children without being childish.

Turning from his work to his art, one is impressed by the versatility of his method. Blank verse he seems to have avoided; and he has printed but one sonnet. On the other hand he has certainly "touched the tender stops of various quills." He is as familiar with the anapests of Prior and Cowper as he is with the octaves of Praed and Byron; he has adopted with equal good-fortune the measures of Lamb's "Hester," of Holmes's "Last Leaf" and of Longfellow's "Skeleton in Armour." But though the vehicle is varied, the voice is unique. It is always a poet who speaks,—a poet of singular urbanity, refinement, restraint,—a poet with a distinctive and personal note, with an exceptional power of direct and lucid expression, with a wit which is never bitter, and with a humour which is not the less seductive because it has a tinge of sadness.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

LONDON LYRICS.

FREDERICK LOCKER.

I.—THE UNREALISED IDEAL.

MY only Love is always near,—
In country or in town
I see her twinkling feet, I hear
The whisper of her gown.

She foots it ever fair and young,
Her locks are tied in haste,
And one is o'er her shoulder flung,
And hangs below her waist.

She ran before me in the meads ;
And down this world-worn track
She leads me on ; but while she leads
She never gazes back.

And yet her voice is in my dreams,
To witch me more and more ;
That wooing voice ! Ah me, it seems
Less near me than of yore.

Lightly I sped when hope was high,
And youth beguiled the chase ;
I follow—follow still ; but I
Shall never see her Face.

II.—TO MY GRANDMOTHER.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE BY MR. ROMNEY.

*Under the elm a rustic seat
Was merriest Susan's pet retreat
To merry-make.*

THIS Relative of mine,
Was she seventy-and-nine
When she died ?
By the canvas may be seen
How she look'd at seventeen,
As a Bride.

Beneath a summer tree
Her maiden reverie
Has a charm ;
Her ringlets are in taste ;
What an arm ! and what a waist
For an arm !

With her bridal-wreath, bouquet,
Lace farthingale, and gay
Falbala,—
If Romney's touch be true,
What a lucky dog were you,
Grandpapa !

Her lips are sweet as love ;
They are parting ! Do they move ?
Are they dumb ?
Her eyes are blue, and beam
Beseechingly, and seem
To say, "Come !"

What funny fancy slips
From atween these cherry lips ?
 Whisper me,
Fair Sorceress in paint,
What canon says I mayn't
 Marry thee ?

That good-for-nothing Time
Has a confidence sublime !
 When I first
Saw this Lady, in my youth,
Her winters had, forsooth,
 Done their worst.

Her locks, as white as snow,
Once shamed the swarthy crow ;
 By-and-by
That fowl's avenging sprite
Set his cruel foot for spite
 Near her eye.

Her rounded form was lean,
And her silk was bombazine ;
 Well I wot
With her needles would she sit,
And for hours would she knit,—
 Would she not ?

Ah perishable clay !
Her charms had dropt away
 One by one :
But if she heaved a sigh
With a burthen, it was, "Thy
 Will be done."

In travail, as in tears,
With the fardel of her years
 Overprest,
In mercy she was borne
Where the weary and the worn
 Are at rest.

O if you now are there,
And sweet as once you were,
 Grandmamma,
This nether world agrees
You'll all the better please
 Grandpapa.

III.—THE OLD OAK TREE AT HATFIELD
 BROAD OAK.

Hallingbury : April, 1859.

A MIGHTY growth ! The county side
Lamented when the Giant died,
For England loves her trees :
What misty legends round him cling ;
How lavishly he once could fling
His acorns to the breeze !

Who struck a thousand roots in fame,
Who gave the district half its name,
Will not be soon forgotten :
Last spring he show'd but one green bough,
The red leaves hang there yet,—and now
His very props are rotten !

Elate, the thunderbolt he braved,
For centuries his branches waved
A welcome to the blast ;

From reign to reign he bore a spell ;
No forester had dared to fell
What time has fell'd at last.

The Monarch wore a leafy crown,
And wolves, ere wolves were hunted down,
Found shelter in his gloom ;
Unnumber'd squirrels frolick'd free,
Glad music fill'd the gallant Tree
From stem to topmost bloom.

It's hard to say, 'twere vain to seek
When first he ventured forth, a meek
Petitioner for dew ;
No Saxon spade disturb'd his root,
The rabbit spared the tender shoot,
And valiantly he grew,

And show'd some inches from the ground
When St. Augustine came and found
Us very proper Vandals :
Then nymphs had bluer eyes than hose ;
England then measured men by blows,
And measured time by candles.

The pilgrim bless'd his grateful shade
Ere Richard led the first crusade ;
And maidens loved to dance
Where, boy and man, in summer-time,
Chaucer had ponder'd o'er his rhyme ;
And Robin Hood, perchance,

Stole hither to Maid Marian ;
(Well, if they did not come, one can
At any rate suppose it ;)

They met beneath the mistletoe,—
We've done the same, and ought to know
The reason why they chose it !

And this was call'd the *Traitor's Branch*,
Stern Warwick hung six yeomen stanch
Along its mighty fork ;
Uncivil wars for them ! The fair
Red rose and white still bloom, but where
Are Lancaster and York ?

Right mournfully his leaves he shed
To shroud the graves of England's dead,
By English falchion slain ;
And cheerfully, For England's sake,
He sent his kin to sea with Drake,
When Tudor humbled Spain.

While Blake was fighting with the Dutch
They gave his poor old arms a crutch ;
And thrice-four maids and men ate
A meal within his rugged bark,
When Coventry bewitch'd the Park,
And Chatham ruled the Senate.

His few remaining boughs were green,
And dappled sunbeams danced between
Upon the dappled deer,
When, clad in black, two mourners met
To read the Waterloo Gazette,—
They mourn'd their darling here.

They join'd their Boy. The Tree at last
Lies prone, discoursing of the past,
Some fancy-dreams awaking ;

At rest, though headlong changes come,
Though nations arm to roll of drum,
And dynasties are quaking.

Romantic Spot ! By honest pride
Of old tradition sanctified ;
My pensive vigil keeping,
Thy beauty moves me like a spell,
And thoughts, and tender thoughts, upwell,
That fill my heart to weeping.

* * * * *

The Squire affirms, with gravest look,
His Oak goes back to Doomsday Book :
And some say even higher !
We rode last week to see the Ruin,
We love the fair domain it grew in,
And well we love the Squire.

A nature loyally controll'd,
And fashion'd in that righteous mould
Of English gentleman ;
My child some day will read these rhymes,
She loved her "godpapa" betimes,—
The little Christian !

I love the Past, its ripe pleasure,
And lusty thought, and dim romance,—
Its heart-compelling ditties ;
But more, these ties, in mercy sent,
With faith and true affection blent,
And, wanting them, I were content
To murmur, "*Nunc dimittis.*"

IV.—AT HER WINDOW.

*Ah, minstrel, how strange is
The carol you sing !
Let Psyche who ranges
The garden of spring,
Remember the changes
December will bring.*

BEATING Heart ! we come again
Where my Love reposes :
This is Mabel's window-pane ;
These are Mabel's roses.

Is she nested ? Does she kneel
In the twilight stilly,
Lily clad from throat to heel,
She, my virgin Lily ?

Soon the wan, the wistful stars,
Fading, will forsake her ;
Elves of light, on beamy bars,
Whisper then, and wake her.

Let this friendly pebble plead
At her flowery grating ;
If she hear me will she heed ?
Mabel, I am waiting.

Mabel will be deck'd anon,
Zoned in bride's apparel ;
Happy zone ! Oh hark to yon
Passion-shaken carol !

Sing thy song thou tranced thrush,
Pipe thy best, thy clearest ;—
Hush, her lattice moves, O hush—
Dearest Mabel !—dearest . . .

V.—AN INVITATION TO ROME.

1863.

OH, come to Rome, it is a pleasant place,
Your London sun is here, and smiling brightly ;
The Briton, too, puts on his cheery face,
And *Mrs. Bull* acquits herself politely.
The Romans are an easy-going race,
With simple wives, more dignified than sprightly ;
I see them at their doors, as day is closing,
Prouder than duchesses, and more imposing.

A sweet *far niente* life promotes the graces ;
They pass from dreamy bliss to wakeful glee,
And in their bearing and their speech, one traces
A breadth, a depth—a charm of courtesy
Not found in busy or inclement places ;
Their clime and tongue are much in harmony :
The Cockney met in Middlesex, or Surrey,
Is often cold, and always in a hurry.

Oh, come to Rome, nor be content to read
Of famous palace and of stately street
Whose fountains ever run with joyful speed,
And never-ceasing murmur. Here we greet
Memnon's vast monolith ; or, gay with weed,
Rich capitals, as corner-stone or seat,
The site of vanish'd temples, where now moulder
Old ruins, masking ruin even older.

Ay, come, and see the statues, pictures, churches,
Although the last are commonplace, or florid.—
Who say 'tis here that superstition perches?

Myself I'm glad the marbles have been quarried.
The sombre streets are worthy your researches,
Tho' ways are foul, and lava pavement's horrid.
The pleasant sights, that squeamishness disparages
Are miss'd by all who roll along in carriages.

I dare not speak of Michael Angelo,
Such theme were all too splendid for my pen :
And if I breathe the name of Sanzio

(The first of painters and of gentlemen,)
Is it that love casts out my fear, and so
I claim with him a kindredship? Ah, when
We love, the name is on our hearts engraven,
As is thy name, my own dear Bard of Avon.

Nor is the Coliseum theme of mine,
'Twas built for poet of a larger daring ;
The world goes there with torches ; I decline
Thus to affront the moonbeams with their flaring.
Some day in May our forces we'll combine
(Just you and I), and try a midnight airing.
And then I'll quote this rhyme to' you—and then
You'll muse upon the vanity of men !

Come ! We will charter such a pair of nags !
The country's better seen when one is riding :
We'll roam where yellow Tiber speeds or lags
At will. The aqueducts are yet bestriding
With giant march (now whole, now broken crags
With flowers plumed) the swelling and subsiding
Campagna, girt by purple hills afar,
That melt in light beneath the evening star.

A drive to Palestrina will be pleasant ;
The wild fig grows where erst her rampart stood ;
There oft, in goat-skin clad, a sunburnt peasant
Like Pan comes frisking from his ilex wood,
And seems to wake the past time in the present.
Fair *contadina*, mark his mirthful mood ;
No antique satyr he. The nimble fellow
Can join with jollity your *saltarello*.

Old sylvan peace and liberty ! The breath
Of life to unsophisticated man.
Here Mirth may pipe, Love here may weave his wreath,
“*Per dar’ al mio bene.*” When you can,
Come share their leafy solitudes. Pale Death
And Time are grudging of our little span :
Wan Time speeds lightly o’er the changing corn,
Death grins from yonder cynical old thorn.

Oh, come ! I send a leaf of April fern,
It grew where beauty lingers round decay :
Ashes long buried in a sculptured urn
Are not more dead than Rome—so dead to-day !
That better time, for which the patriots yearn,
Delights the gaze, again to fade away.
They wait, they pine for what is long denied,
And thus wait I till thou art by my side.

Thou’rt far away ! Yet, while I write, I still
Seem gently, Sweet, to clasp thy hand in mine ;
I cannot bring myself to drop the quill,
I cannot yet thy little hand resign !
The plain is fading into darkness chill,
The Sabine peaks are flush’d with light divine,
I watch alone, my fond thought wings to thee ;
Oh, come to Rome. Oh come,—oh come to me !

VI.—MY SONG.

1876.

YOU ask a Song,
Such as of yore, an autumn's eventide,
Some blest Boy-Poet caroll'd,—and then died.
Nay, *I* have sung too long.
Say, shall I fling
A sigh to Beauty at her window-pane?
I sang there once, may not I once again?
Or tell me whom to sing.
—The peer of Peers?
Lord of the wealth that gives his time employ:
Time to possess, but hardly to enjoy—
He cannot need *my* tears.
—The man of *Mind*
Or Priest who darken what was never day,
I cannot sing them, yet I will not say
Such guides are wholly blind.
—The Orator?
He quiet lies where yon fresh hillock heaves:
'Twere well to sprinkle there those laurel-leaves
He won, but never wore.
Or shall I twine
The Cypress? Wreath of glory and of gloom.—
To march a gallant Soldier to his doom
Needs fuller voice than mine.
No Lay have I,
No murmur'd measure meet for your delight,
No Song of Love and Death, to make you quite
Forget that we must die.
Something is wrong;
The World is over-wise; or, more's the pity,
These days are far too serious for a Ditty,
Yet take it, take My Song.

Sir Joseph Noel Paton.

1821.

JOSEPH NOEL PATON, painter and poet, was born at Dumfermline, Fifeshire, on the 13th of December, 1821. He was admitted a student at the Royal Academy, London, in 1843, and in 1845 distinguished himself by gaining a premium awarded by the Royal Commission at the Westminster Hall competition of that year, an accomplishment which he repeated in 1847. In 1850 he became an academician of the Royal Scottish Academy; and in 1865 was appointed limner to the Queen for Scotland, in 1867 receiving the honour of knighthood. In art his work has embraced classical, romantic, mythological, and scriptural subjects, showing a love of allegory, and perhaps more of thought and fancy than emotion. His published poetry is contained in two volumes, "Poems by a Painter," issued in 1861, and "Spindrift" which followed in 1867. These display the love of colour, the eye for the picturesque, and the power of description which one naturally looks for in the work of a painter-poet, but also a lyric gift which is not always found in the work of those who lay aside the brush for the lyre. This is shown in such songs as that beginning—

"With the sunshine, and the swallows, and the flowers,
She is coming, my belovèd, o'er the sea,"

and the more mournful plaint—

“There is a wail in the wind to-night,
A dirge in the plashing rain,
That brings old yearnings round my heart,
Old dreams into my brain,
As I gaze into the wintry dark
Through the blurred and blackened pane :
Far memories of golden hours
That will not come again,—
Alas !
That never will come again.

Wild woodland odours wander by—
Warm breath of new-mown hay—
I hear the broad, brown river flow,
Half-hid in bowering may ;
While eyes of love look through my soul,
As on that last sweet day ;
But a chilly shadow floats between
That will not pass away—
Ah, no !
That never will pass away.”

The ballad “The Last of the *Eurydice*” was written immediately on receipt of the news of the disaster, and appeared in the *Scotsman* of the following day. The refrain—

“Only an hour from home”—

is a happy illustration of the indefinable magic which makes some phrases once uttered haunt the memory and linger on the ear.

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS.

JOSEPH NOEL PATON.

I.—THE TOMB IN THE CHANCEL.

TO W. H. P.

I.

UP from the willowy Wharfe the white haze crept,
The yellow leaves were falling one by one ;
When through the Priory nave we softly stept
To where—his clangorous life-moillong since done—
Sir Everard Raby in his hauberk slept,
In the still chancel corner, all alone.
Ah, time had used him roughly ! Helm and shield,
All banged and battered, as in mortal field ;
The knightly baldric brast, the brave sword gone
That won his spurs at dusty Ascalon.
But broken harness or dishonoured crest
Boots not to him so meekly slumbering there,
With stony feet crossed in eternal rest,
And stony fingers locked in everlasting prayer.

II.

The autumn sunlight touched his craven mail
With ghostly radiance—cyclas, belt, and lace ;
Scattered wan splendours all about the place,
And with fantastic necromancy played
Amongst the dust our quiet moving made ;
While o'er his suppliant hands and heavenward face
It hung a mournful glory, soft and pale,
As if, through mist of half-remembered tears,
It shone from far, the light of buried years !—
We leaned in silence on the oaken rail,
And, 'mid the hush, this thought swelled like a psalm
In my heart's sanctuary : O that we, too, might bear
Our cross through life's stern conflict, as to wear
In death, like him, the crown of everlasting calm.

II.—WITH THE SUNSHINE AND THE
SIFALLOWS.

WITH the sunshine and the swallows and the
flowers,
She is coming, my belovèd, o'er the sea !
And I sit alone and count the weary hours,
Till she cometh in her beauty back to me ;
And my heart will not be quiet,
But, in a "purple riot,"
Keeps ever madly beating
At the thought of that sweet meeting,
When she cometh with the summer o'er the sea ;
All the sweetness of the south
On the roses of her mouth,
All the fervour of its skies
In her gentle northern eyes,
As she cometh, my belovèd, home to me !

No more, o' nights, the shivering north complains,
But blithe birds twitter in the crimson dawn ;
No more the fairy frost-flowers fret the panes,
But snowdrops gleam by garden-path and lawn ;
And at times a white cloud wingeth
From the southland up, and bringeth
A warm wind, odour-laden,
From the bowers of that fair Aden
Where she lingers by the blue Tyrrhenian Sea ;
And I turn my lips to meet
Its kisses faint and sweet ;
For I know from hers they've brought
The message, rapture-fraught :
"I am coming, love, with summer, home to thee !"

III.—REQUIEM.

WITHERED pansies faint and sweet,
O'er his breast in silence shed,
Faded lilies o'er his feet,
Waning roses round his head,
Where in dreamless sleep he lies—
Folded palms and sealèd eyes,—
Young Love, within my bosom—dead.

Young Love that was so fond, so fair,
With his mouth of rosy red,
Argent wing and golden hair,
And those blue eyen, glory-fed
From some fount of splendour, far
Beyond or moon or sun or star—
And can it be that he is dead ?

Ay ! his breast is cold as snow :
Pulse and breath for ever fled ;—
If I kist him ever so,
To my kiss he were as lead ;
If I clipt him as of yore
He would answer me no more
With lip or hand—for he is dead.

But breathe no futile sigh ; no tear
Smirch his pure and lonely bed.
Let no foolish cippus rear
Its weight above him. Only spread
Rose, lily, pale forget-me-not,
And pansies round the silent spot
Where in his youth he lieth—dead.

IV.—LIGHT AND SHADOW.

LIFE, thou wert once so sweet, so bright,
I grudged each hour that slumber stole
From happy Day—through happy Night
Brought ever dreams of new delight
To haunt the chambers of my soul.
Now thou art all so dark, so drear,
I pray for sleep to drown the pain,
Though in his grisly train appear
A thousand phantom-shapes of fear
To wring the heart and sere the brain.

V.—AMATHEA.

(FROM AN EPIGRAM OF THEON OF SAMOS.)

I GAZED into her deep, dark eyes :
Gazed down, I thought, into her soul ;
And my heart leaped with glad surprise
As through their limpid darkness stole
A starry radiance—like the gleam
Of Hesper, when at blush of even
Fond Psyche first in raptured dream
Clasped her young Eros fresh from heaven.
I took the glowing hand that played
In dusky tangles of her hair ;
I drew her closer—half afraid
Her form would melt in rosy air.
You love me, O my queen !—I cried ;
She stared with wide eyes, cold and dead ;
Then, with a low, soft laugh of pride,
Turned from me.—I arose and fled
In wrath and shame.—The dawning light
Of love that in those dark eyes shone
With such sweet presage of delight—
Was but the reflex of my own !

Yet still their baleful splendour burns
To lure me, moth-like, as of yore ;
I hate,—and love, alas ! by turns ;
But they shall fool me never more !

VI.—THE LAST OF THE EURYDICÉ.

Sunday, March 24, 1878.

THE training-ship Eurydicé—
As tight a craft, I ween,
As ever bore brave men who loved
Their Country and their Queen—
Built when a ship, sir, *was* a ship,
And not a steam-machine.

Six months or more she had been out
Cruising the Indian sea ;
And now, with all her canvas bent—
A fresh breeze blowing free—
Up Channel in her pride she came,
The brave Eurydicé.

On Saturday it was we saw
The English cliffs appear,
And fore and aft from man and boy
Uprang one mighty cheer ;
While many a rough-and-ready hand
Dashed off the gathering tear.

We saw the heads of Dorset rise
Fair in the Sabbath sun.
We marked each hamlet gleaming white—
The church spires one by one.
We thought we heard the church bells ring
To hail our voyage done !

"Only an hour from Spithead, lads :
Only an hour from home !"
So sang the captain's cheery voice
As we spurned the ebbing foam ;
And each young sea-dog's heart sang back,
"Only an hour from home !"

No warning ripple crisped the wave,
To tell of danger nigh ;
Nor looming rack, nor driving scud :
From out a smiling sky,
With sound as of the trump of doom,
The squall broke suddenly.

A hurricane of wind and snow
From off the Shanklin shore.
It caught us in its blinding whirl
One instant, and no more ;—
For ere we dreamt of trouble near
All earthly hope was o'er.

No time to shorten sail—no time
To change the vessel's course ;
The storm had caught her crowded masts
With swift, resistless force.
Only one shrill, despairing cry
Rose o'er the tumult hoarse,

And broadside the great ship went down
Amid the swirling foam ;
And with her nigh four hundred men
Went down, in sight of home
(Fletcher and I alone were saved)—
Only an hour from home !

Robert Leighton.

1822—1869.

ROBERT LEIGHTON was born at Dundee on the 20th of February, 1822, and was educated at the Dundee Academy. Part of his youth was spent upon the farm of his stepfather in Fifeshire, and on leaving school in 1837 he entered his brother's office in Dundee. In the years 1842-3 he voyaged round the world in a sailing ship belonging to his brother, and on his return settled at Preston in Lancashire. In 1854 he undertook the management of a branch business of a Liverpool firm at Ayr, where he resided for four years, after which he became connected with the head office at Liverpool, travelling during the greater part of each year in England, Scotland, and Ireland. He died at Liverpool on the 10th of May, 1869.

Robert Leighton's poems were the recreations of a busy life, and are characterised by the sound sense and wise thoughtfulness of the man of business, associated with the more delicate insight and the wider range of the poet. He was no imitator of other men, nor follower of any school, but gave forth the impressions of a sensitive heart, and the reflections of an original mind upon a large variety of themes, all of which he touched but to adorn. In England his work has never received the attention it deserves, though in America and in Scotland it has

had wider recognition. His Scotch poems, such as "John and Tibbie's Dispute," and the "Bapteement of the Bairn," are among the best of their kind, and display genuine humour and satire, but it is his "Records" and "Musings" which entitle him to a place in this work. These reveal a mind laden with rich thought, a means of expression teeming with graceful fancy, and a sensitiveness of nature which responded with electrical immediateness to the influences of natural beauty. Witness the following impromptu to "A Breath of Whin":—

"I smelt the whins in passing up the lane,
And years of childhood, crowded into minutes,
Swept through my bosom in a sweet sad train
Of butterflies and linnets.

"I saw the fairies in the haunted dell,
The woodlands with their shadows, bright and mazy:
I heard, on sunny banks the sweet blue-bell
Tinkling unto the daisy.

"A thousand images arose within—
Forgotten images in childhood noted;
And all awaken'd by a breath of whin
That in the loaning floated.

"Forgetting is no losing; and if death
Be higher life, the life that lay before it
May easily be restored, if thus a breath
Can faithfully restore it."

ALFRED H. MILES.

MUSINGS.

ROBERT LEIGHTON.

I.—FIRST BE, THEN TEACH.

IF, Poet, thou wouldst live beyond the age,
First *be* the thing thy teachings would create :
Make thine own life oracular, thy page
Will then be lord of Fate.

A few unlettered sentences Christ gave
Out of His purity. The years may bear
Their unregretted learning to the grave—
His words we cannot spare.

II.—INCENSE OF FLOWERS.

THIS rich abundance of the rose, its breath
On which I almost think my soul could live,
This sweet ambrosia, which even in death
Its leaves hold on to give.

Whence is it ? From dank earth or scentless air ?
Or from the inner sanctuaries of heaven ?
We probe the branch, the root—no incense there—
O God, whence is it given ?

Is it the essence of the morning dew,
Or distillation of a purer sphere—
The breath of the immortals coming through
To us immortals here ?

Exquisite mystery, my heart devours
The living inspiration, and I know
Sweet revelations with the breath of flowers
Into our beings flow.

III.—SEEING.

IT needs not scholar'd training to receive
Truth when it comes ; it often stands aloof
From that ; while, simply seeing, we believe,
Nor ask for any proof.

For as the link'd notes are to the ear
Proof of their harmony, so truth appeals
Unto an inward faculty as clear,
That argues not, but feels.

And when we've asked the seer for some test
That this is as he says, and that is so,
He has not given any, but confess'd
"I cannot, yet I know."

IV.—DUTY.

I REACH a duty, yet I do it not,
And therefore see no higher : but if done,
My view is brighten'd, and another spot
Seen on my moral sun.

For, be the duty high as angel's flight,
Fulfil it, and a higher will arise,
E'en from its ashes. Duty is infinite—
Receding as the skies.

And thus it is, the purest most deplore
Their want of purity. As fold by fold,
In duties done, falls from their eyes, the more
Of Duty they behold.

Were it not wisdom, then, to close our eyes
On duties crowding only to appal ?
No : Duty is our ladder to the skies,
And, climbing not we fall.

V.—BEAUTY AND RECTITUDE.

'TWOULD seem there's some affinity between
Beauty and rectitude. We cannot sway
From truth and virtue but it draws a screen
Over the face of day :

The blue sky blurr'd, and earth's refreshing green,
With hill and dale and cattle-haunted fords,
All dead and hollow as the ochred scene
Round the dramatic boards.

The flowers shut up their wonder from our eyes,
Their beauty that enchanted us ; and books
Refuse to give the deeper sense that lies
Reveal'd to virtuous looks.

A soul of artless purity discerns
Poetic wreathings in prosaic facts,
And finds that universal Nature turns
To beauty all her acts.

To perfect purity—if such could be—
This earth were all transparent, the dull clod—
In which we neither life nor beauty see—
Breathing the living God.

Beauty of nature through the varied year,
Beauty of truth, of right, of form, of soul—
All beauty is of God—one atmosphere
That permeates the whole.

Let beauty cease to be our daily food,
We lose the finer sense of truth and right :
Forsake the holy paths of rectitude,
And beauty suffers blight.

VI.—I KNOW THE FACE.

I KNOW the face of him who with the sphere
Of unseen presences communion keeps.
His eyes retain its wonders in their clear
Unfathomable deeps.

His every feature, rugged or refined,
Shines from the inner light ; and large or small
His earthly state, he from the world behind
Brings wealth that beggars all.

He brings the thought that gives to earthly things
Eternal meaning ; brings the living faith
That, even now, puts on the immortal wings,
And clears the shadow, Death.

This in his face I see ; and when we meet,
My earthliness is shamed by him ; but yet
Takes hope to think that, in the unholy street,
Such men are to be met.

VII.—TEARS.

WHENCE are these tears that come with sudden
start,
In spite of nerve that struggles to restrain ?
From overflowing cisterns of the heart ?
Or wells within the brain ?

That heart-beats have to do with them I know—
Quick beats of joy, slow beats of weary dole :
And, whether out of heart or brain they flow,
Close kin are they with soul.

Fine mists of thought condensed to dewy speech—
Pearls of emotion from their shells set free—
Wavelets that come with treasure to the beach
Of life's mysterious sea :

Naked affections from their Eden driven,
To seek another through this world's unrest—
Embodied spirits from the little heaven
Each keeps in his own breast :

Akin to all that we most sacred hold—
Twin-born with thought, affection, joy, and care—
Twin-born, but how, we never may unfold,
Nor Heaven itself declare.

They are not what they seem. If we despise
The weak creations of our childish years,
A higher wisdom comes to recognise
The sacredness of tears.

VIII.—THE BUNCH OF LARKS.

PORTLY he was, in carriage somewhat grand ;
Of gentleman he wore the accepted marks :
He thrived the busy street, and in his hand
He bore a bunch of larks !

There be some things that may be carried—yes,
A gentleman may carry larks—if dead ;
Or any slaughter'd game ; not fish, still less
The homely beef or bread.

I met him in the street, and turn'd about,
And mused long after he had flaunted by.
A bunch of Larks ! and his intent, no doubt,
To have them in a pie.

Yes, four-and-twenty larks baked in a pie !
O, what a feast of melody is there !
The ringing chorus of a summer sky !
A dish of warbling air !

How many dusty wanderers of the earth
Have those still'd voices lifted from the dust !
And now to end their almost Heavenly mirth
Beneath a gourmand's crust !

But as he picks their thin ambrosial throats,
Will no accusing memories arise,
Of grassy glebes, and heaven-descending notes,
And soul-engulfing skies ?

"Give me," cries he, "the *substance* of the thing—
Something that I can eat, or drink, or feel—
A poem for the money it will bring—
Larks for a dainty meal."

Well, he may have his substance, and I mine.
Deep in my soul the throbbing lark-notes lie.
My substance lasts, and takes a life divine—
His passes with the pie.

IX.—THE DRIED-UP FOUNTAIN.

OUTSIDE the village, by the public road,
I know a dried-up fountain, overgrown
With herbs, the haunt of legendary toad,
And grass, by Nature sown.

I know not where its trickling life was still'd.
No living ears its babbling tongue has caught.
But often, as I pass, I see it fill'd
And running o'er with thought.

I see it as it was in days of old,
The blue-eyed maiden stooping o'er its brim,
And smoothing in its glass her locks of gold,
Lest she should meet with *him*.

She knows that he is near, yet I can see
Her sweet confusion when she hears him come.
No tryst had they, though every evening he
Carries her pitchers home.

The ancient beggar limps along the road
At thirsty noon, and rests him by its brink ;
The dusty pedlar lays aside his load,
And pauses there to drink.

And there the village children come to play,
When busy parents work in shop and field.
The swallows, too, find there the loamy clay
When 'neath the eaves they build.

When cows at eve come crooning home, the boy
Leaves them to drink, while his mechanic skill
Within the brook sets up, with inward joy,
His tiny water-mill.

And when the night is hush'd in summer sleep,
And rest has come to labourer and team,
I hear the runnel through the long grass creep,
As 'twere a whispering dream.

Alas! 'tis all a dream. Lover and lass,
Children and wanderers, are in their graves ;
And where the fountain flow'd, a greener grass,
Its *In-memorial*, waves.

X.—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

“*SIC semper tyrannis*,” the assassin cried,
As Lincoln fell. O villain ! who than he
More lived to set both slave and tyrant free !
Or so enrapt with plans of freedom died,
That even thy treacherous deed shall glance aside,
And do the dead man’s will by land and sea,
Win bloodless battles, and make that to be
Which to his living mandate was denied !
Peace to that gentle heart ! the peace he sought
For all mankind, nor for it dies in vain.
Rest to the uncrown’d King ! who, toiling, brought
His bleeding country through that dreadful reign ;
Who, living, earn’d a world’s revering thought,
And, dying, leaves his name without a stain.

XI.—NEAR DUNBAR.

HERE Cromwell stood, that dark and frowning night,
Hemm’d in upon this desperate tongue of land,
The sea behind, the sea on either hand,
And, fronting him, the foe on yonder height.
What chance for Cromwell in to-morrow’s fight,
If thus the order of the battle stand !
He was but captain, the supreme command
He knew was His who, to the most lorn right,
Oft gives mysterious victory. And so,
Arm’d with this faith, of fear he never dream’d.
For ever with that man a Power there seem’d,
That conquer’d first the judgment of his foe,
Then gave an easy field. So would it be
With all who own’d as deep a trust as he.

RECORDS.

ROBERT LEIGHTON.

(v.)

I SADDEN when amid the stars I look—
And think the earth is only one of them.
Imagination soars beyond all ken,
Yet is no nearer to the end of stars.
Away into the painful deeps of space
Oppressèd thought speeds on its endless way,
But still unnumber'd worlds lie all around,
And this globed earth becomes a winking point,
Unmark'd, unknown from millions of the same.

And so I cannot look amid the stars,
And link the earth as one upon my vision ;
But straight a blighting sadness on me falls :
I lose all faith in man's high destiny,
More than may well belong to a race of ants ;
And nothing can I see for him in time,
But eat and sleep, that he may live and work,
Then die that he may make room for another.
O, there is nothing else ! What *could* there be
For him who is but an atom of the whole—
A grain work'd in amongst the myriads
That make the solid rock ?

But whilst I heave
My sadness on the night, the stars, like eyes—
Most earnest, pitying eyes—beweep the lie
That festers in my brain. Ye pulsing stars !
We revel nightly in your nectar'd light
Until we reel in joy like drunken gods :
Ye flood us into trances with your beauty ;
But are ye *conscious* of the power ye own ?

Constant and true ye are ; but do ye crave
For ever, as do we, *more* of God's truth ?
Have ye a sense of *duty* ? Know ye ought
Of *right* and *wrong* ? Dream ye of buried time ?
Or brood ye, prophet-like, on years unborn ?
Ah, no ! Ye roll out innocent as tears
Upon the cheek of Night, and have no sense
Of that emotion out of which ye came—
No feeling of the light that in you gleams.
Ye have no heart-eye, blear'd with the regret
Of wasted years, wild wandering in the Now,
Or radiant with the orient dawn of hope.
There is in you no show of comprehension :
Brighter than eyes ye are, yet want perception.

Then why should we who have all these be sad,
And feel ourselves eclipsèd by the stars ?
Earth, thou'rt a star, yet art beneath our feet :
Man is thy lord, and thou his vassal nurse :
And all the proud orbs of the arching sky
Bow down to his high thought—I am not sad,
Nor feel I now the glory of the stars
Oppress and dwarf me into littleness :
Believing, this that sees and comprehends
Is greater than that seen and comprehended.

Believing ? Thou must *know* and *feel* that truth :
Believing only, and repeating thus
The thoughts that are as old as poet's song,
Will never make thee greater than the stars ;
And thou art dead as they, unless that truth
Be in thy soul as blood is in thy frame.

Matthew Arnold.

1822—1888.

“ For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
And purged its faith, and trimm'd its fire,
Shew'd me the high white star of Truth,
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.”

THE life of the poet respecting whom we are about to speak was not marked by any stirring incidents or tragic episodes, but was rather the tranquil, yet lofty, passage of one who lived unmoved by any tempestuous outbursts of turbulent passion, by any sudden caprice of good or evil fortune. It was the calm, cultured existence of him who, whether watching from the heights above, or freely discoursing with his fellow-men on the crowded highways of the world, “saw life steadily” (to use the poet’s own phrase), “and saw it whole.” Nevertheless, it is necessary to give a brief outline of its history, inasmuch as the lives of all authors, and more especially the lives of all poets, must inevitably affect, and must colour and influence more or less directly, the fashion and substance of the work they produce.

Matthew Arnold was the eldest son of the Rev. Thomas Arnold, D.D., the illustrious head-master of Rugby, and was born on December 24th, 1822, at Laleham, a pleasant rustic village situate on the banks of the river Thames, not far from Staines. His remote ancestors are said to have lived at

Lowestoft, in Suffolk ; but his grandfather, William Arnold, resided, and was the collector of customs, at West Cowes, in the Isle of Wight. Educated for a while at Winchester, Matthew Arnold was thence removed to Rugby, where in 1840 he won the prize for English verse, the subject of the poem being "Alaric at Rome." This composition is one of considerable merit ; and the poet, in the last year of his life, in a letter addressed to Mr. Edmund Gosse, referring to the poem, observed, "Yes ! 'Alaric at Rome' is my Rugby prize poem, and I think it is better than my Oxford one, 'Cromwell,' only you will see that I had been very much reading *Childe Harold*."

From Rugby the poet passed to Balliol College, Oxford, where he had been elected to a scholarship at the same time as the late James Riddell ; and the following lines, by another contemporary at the University, John Campbell Shairp, late Principal of St. Andrews, give an interesting delineation of his idiosyncrasy, manners, and character at this period :—

"Among that scholar band the youngest pair
 In hall and chapel side by side were seen,
 Each of high hopes and noble promise heir,
 But far in thought apart—a world between ;
 The one wide welcomed for a father's fame,
 Entered with free, bold step that seemed to claim
 Fame for himself, nor on another lean.

"So full of power, yet blithe and debonnair,
 Rallying his friends with pleasant banter gay,
 Or half-a-dream chaunting with jaunty air
 Great words of Goethe, catch of Béranger.
 We see the banter sparkle in his prose,
 But knew not then the undertone that flows,
 So calmly sad, through all his stately lay."

* * * * *

There are references in many of Matthew Arnold's poems, and more especially in "Thyrsis" and "The Scholar Gipsy," which serve to indicate that during the years spent at the University his love of long country walks had made him familiar with all the neighbouring villages, woods, farms, brooks, and byways. He knew "the river-fields, above by Ensham, down by Sandford," "the track by Childsworth Farm,"—he knew "the stripling Thames at Bab-lock-hithe," "the warm, green-muffled Cumner hills," "the distant Wychwood bowers," "the skirts of Bagley-wood," "the abandoned lasher above Godstow Bridge," and "the signal-clm that looks on Ilsley Downs." "I know these slopes," he writes. "Who knows them if not I?" It may be inferred, therefore, that in this respect, if in no other, he resembled his father, Dr. Arnold, whose great delights were wild-flowers and country rambles. Another recreation occasionally indulged in by the poet is referred to in a letter written by his friend, A. H. Clough, at Patterdale, in which the latter observes that "Matt. has gone out fishing when he ought, properly, to be working, it being nearly four o'clock." In another of Clough's letters, written a little later, occurs the following significant passage: "First of all, you will be glad to hear that Matt. Arnold is elected Fellow of Oriel. . . . Mrs. Arnold is, of course, well pleased, as also the venerable poet at Rydal, who had taken M. under his special protection." It will be remembered that Dr. Arnold had built himself a house (Fox How) about half a mile from Rydal Mount, and doubtless Matthew Arnold had continual intercourse with Wordsworth about this period. He had won the

Newdigate prize for English verse in 1840; but, having been elected Fellow of Oriel in 1845, he did not leave Oxford until 1847, when Lord Lansdowne appointed him his private secretary. In 1851 he married the daughter of the late Mr. Justice Wightman, and in the same year he received an appointment as Inspector of Schools under the Education Department, which he held for upwards of thirty years.

"There were voices in the air when I was at Oxford!" With these words I remember hearing Mr. Arnold commence a lecture which he delivered at the Royal Institution; and the voices to which he referred were those of Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle. These were the voices which, together with that of Wordsworth, chiefly influenced his Oxford life and the poetry which he afterwards composed. But there was, methinks, another voice in addition to these—the voice of a man whom the poet has so graphically described, and whose voice was, in some respects, the most potent of all. "Who could resist the charm," he writes, "of that spiritual apparition gliding in the dim afternoon light through the aisles of St. Mary's, rising into the pulpit, and then, in the most entrancing of voices, breaking the silence with words and thoughts which were a religious music—*subtile, sweet, mournful?* I seem to hear him still saying, 'After the fever of life, after weariness and sickness, fightings and despondings, languor and fretfulness, struggling and succeeding; after all the changes and chances of this troubled, unhealthy state, at length comes death, at length the white throne of God, at length the beatific vision.'" It is scarcely necessary to state

that it is the voice of John Henry Newman, whose "religious music" is here referred to—"Subtile, sweet, mournful!" How applicable are these words to a considerable portion of the poetry of Matthew Arnold—to "Dover Beach," for instance, or "Empedocles on Etna;" and we can hardly doubt that much of the poet's own "religious music" (and it were difficult to find words that more justly define his poetry) was, in a measure, due to that of the then incumbent of St. Mary's,—we refer more especially to the manner, tone, and expression, not to the thought or substance of it. The following lines may serve as an example:—

"Haply, the river of Time,—
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

"And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike
Peace to the soul of the man on its breast;
As the pale waste widens around him—
As the banks fade dimmer away—
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite Sea."

It should also be observed that the influence of the spirit and atmosphere of Oxford, which is so perceptible, not only in the character of Arnold, but also in his work, is to a considerable extent only another form or phase of the influence of the spirit

of Newman; and when the poet writes so charmingly, as in the following passage, of his beloved University, we seem to behold, once more, "that spiritual apparition" gliding through the aisles of St. Mary's:—"Beautiful city! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene! . . . And yet, steeped in sentiment as she is, spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of all of us, to the ideal, to perfection,—to beauty, in a word, which is only truth seen from another side?—nearer, perhaps, than all the science of Tübingen."

The first volume of the poet's work was published anonymously in 1849, and was entitled "The Strayed Reveller, and other Poems," by A. His second volume, "Empedocles on Etna, and other Poems," by A., appeared three years later; that is to say, in 1852. In addition to the two poems furnishing the titles, these two volumes contained the "Fragment of an 'Antigone,'" "Resignation," "The Sick King of Bokhara," "The Forsaken Merman," "Myccerinus," "Tristram and Iseult," the "Memorial Verses" on Wordsworth, "Stanzas in Memory of the Author of 'Obermann,'" "The Youth of Man," "Morality," the "Lines written in Kensington Gardens," "Human Life," the series of beautiful lyrics referring to "Marguerite," "A Summer Night," the sonnet on Shakespeare, the one "To a Friend" beginning

"Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my mind?"

that to "George Cruikshank, Esq., on seeing for the first time his Picture of 'The Bottle' in the Country," and the one now entitled "Quiet Work." In addition to these, there are other sonnets and poems included in these two volumes which need not be specially mentioned; and doubtless many readers will be moved to inquire how it was that the poet composed so large a portion of his poetry in two or three years before he reached the age of thirty, and yet wrote so few poems in the remaining thirty-two years of his life. It is not improbable that this was partly caused by the cold indifference with which his poems were received, and by the inadequacy and hostility of his reviewers.

His first volume was reviewed in the *Athenæum* in a "recent verse" article entitled "Poetry of the Million," the writer facetiously observing that this volume by "A." was "A.I. of the lot;" and some five years later another writer in the columns of the same journal warned "him against an over-estimate of his powers," observing that in more than one of his lyrics he had "aimed at a simplicity which on proof turns out to be puerility." Nor did he fare much better at the hands of his friend Clough, who in 1853 reviewed his two first volumes, together with the poems of Alexander Smith, in the *North American Review*. After complaining of the obscurity of "Tristram and Iscult," Clough adds that he nevertheless prefers it to the "pseudo-Greek inflation of the philosopher musing above the crater, and the boy Callicles singing myths upon the mountain." He even admits that "in point of tone and matter" he is inclined to prefer the work of Alexander Smith to that of the author of "Empedocles."

But it is unnecessary to linger among these "cobwebs of criticism." What is our own judgment respecting that noble "strain of choral philosophy," that long and solemn chaunt in which Empedocles utters his soliloquy on the destiny of man, on life and the conduct of life, and which is followed by the song of Callicles beginning?—

"Far, far from here,
The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay
Among the green Illyrian hills! and there
The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
And by the sea, and in the brakes,
The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain-flowers
As virginal and sweet as ours."

* * * * *

In respect of the philosophic chaunt referred to, it may be at once stated that, as regards sanity, thought, and wisdom, it stands forth supreme in English poetry. In the works of no other poet, certainly in no other single poem, do I remember to have met with a "criticism of life" so adequate, lofty, and far-seeing. "It is a model," writes Mr. Swinburne, "of grave, clear, solemn verse; the style plain and bare, but sufficient and strong; the thought deep, lucid, direct. We may say of it what the author has himself said of the wise and sublime verses of Epictetus, that 'the fortitude of that is for the strong, yet the few; even for them the spiritual atmosphere with which it surrounds them is bleak and grey;' but the air is higher and purer, the ground firmer, the view clearer; we have a surer foothold on these cold hills of thought than in the moist fragrance of warmer air which strips the meadows and marshes of sentiment and tradition. . . . It is no small or

common comfort, after all the delicate and ingenious shuffling of other English poets about the edge of deep things, to come upon one who speaks with so large and clear and calm an utterance."

It is interesting to compare this poem with that of *Manfred* by Lord Byron; for there is some resemblance in the story and construction, more especially in the second scene and in the final catastrophe, of those two poems. *Manfred*, wandering among the Bernese Alps, and at times conversing with the Chamois Hunter, may be somewhat melodramatic in the soliloquies which he utters before death overtakes him; but he is unquestionably Byron under an assumed name, giving utterance to his own views and opinions. So also Empedocles, wandering amid the wooded heights of Etna, and at times listening to the songs of the boy Callicles, gives utterance to what we know to be the views of Matthew Arnold, as expressed in other poems composed by him at about the same period. It was the perusal of *Faust*, and the scene on the Hartz Mountains, which suggested to Byron the composition of *Manfred*, but the resemblance between the two poems is only superficial; and how different from either of them is this poem of "Empedocles," adorned as it is with some of the most exquisite lyrics in the English language! Respecting two of these lyrics Mr. Swinburne very justly observes, "for the absolute loveliness of sound and colour in this and the next song there are no adequate words that would not seem violent, and violence is too far from this poetry to invade even the outlying province of commentary." Of these songs I prefer that which concludes the poem, and there is a curious

similarity between the two first lines of it and the following verse which occurs in one of Mangan's translations from Schiller, published about the year 1845,—

“The storm-burst is over—low glows the red sun.”

Yet how fine are the following lines :—

CALLICLES.

(Sings unseen, from below.)

“The track winds down to the clear stream,
To cross the sparkling shallows ; there
The cattle love to gather, on their way
To the high mountain-pastures, and to stay,
Till the rough cow-herds drive them past,
Knee-deep in the cool ford ; for 'tis the last
Of all the woody, high, well-water'd dells
On Etna ; and the beam
Of noon is broken there by chestnut-boughs
Down its steep verdant sides ; the air
Is freshen'd by the leaping stream, which throws
Eternal showers of spray on the moss'd roots
Of trees, and veins of turf, and long dark shoots
Of ivy-plants, and fragrant hanging bells
Of hyacinths, and on late anemones
That muffle its wet banks ; but glade,
And stream, and sward, and chestnut-trees,
End here ; Etna beyond, in the broad glare
Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare ;
The peak, round which the white clouds play.

In such a glen, on such a day,
On Pelion, on the grassy ground,
Chiron, the aged Centaur lay,
The young Achilles standing by.
The Centaur taught him to explore
The mountains ; where the glens are dry
And the tired Centaurs come to rest,
And where the soaking springs abound
And the straight ashes grow for spears,

And where the hill-goats come to feed,
And the sea-eagles build their nest.
He show'd him Phthia far away,
And said : O boy, I taught this lore
To Peleus, in long distant years !
He told him of the Gods, the stars,
The tides ;—and then of mortal wars,
And of the life which heroes lead
Before they reach the Elysian place
And rest in the immortal mead ;
And all the wisdom of his race."

With reference to the other poems by Arnold in which the Greek spirit is especially marked, such as "The Strayed Reveller," "Merope," the "Fragment of an 'Antigone,'" etc., it may be observed that although there is little probability of their ever becoming popular amongst ordinary readers, yet they have already won, and will retain, the favourable recognition of those who are most competent to judge respecting their merits. No other English poems have so closely approached both in form and in spirit the perfect work of the "singer of sweet Colonus."

The poetry of Arnold is, however, defective in one respect, inasmuch as there is in nearly all his metrical compositions a marked absence of that spirit "of joy," that healthy quality of the soul, which in the poems of Wordsworth refreshes our hearts with the dewy gladness of the early morn, and acts upon us as a tonic. It may be that this defect is due to the influence of Senancour, whose writings he so highly esteemed ; or possibly there was a "vague dejection" natural and deeply rooted in the inmost spirit of the man, which the poet's general gaiety of manner and conversation only half concealed. I

possess a photograph of him apparently taken nearly thirty years ago, in which the expression is more grave and *triste* than that his features usually wore in the later years of his life, and it must not be forgotten that his poetry was for the most part composed when he was about thirty years of age. Yet in the stanzas entitled "Obermann Once More" occur the following lines, indicating clearly enough that the poet was not unmindful of the necessity of "joy" to lift and ennoble mankind :—

" The millions suffer still, and grieve—
And what can helpers heal
With old-world cures men half believe
For woes they wholly feel ?

And yet they have such need of joy !
And joy whose grounds are true,
And joy that should all hearts employ
As when the past was new !

* * * * *

But now the past is out of date,
The future not yet born—
And who can be *alone* elate,
While the world lies forlorn ?

* * * * *

What still of strength is left, employ,
That end to help men gain :
One mighty wave of thought and joy
Lifting mankind amain !"

Again, in the "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," a poem in other respects of the highest order, we find the same gloomy strain repeated,—

" Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn :

Their faith, my tears, the world deride;
I come to shed them at their side."

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound,
Ye solemn seats of holy pain !
Take me, cowl'd forms, and fence me round,
Till I possess my soul again ;
Till free my thoughts before me roll,
Not chafed by hourly false control !

* * * * *

But the picture which the poet gives us of the approach from the village of Saint Laurent to the monastery, and the manner of life at the "Carthusians' world-famed home," is beyond all praise for its masterly and exact delineation. Having myself stayed at the Grande Chartreuse, and having twice traversed the five-miles' walk along the "mule-track" from Saint Laurent,

"Per invias rupes, fera per juga
Clivosque præruptos, sonantes
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem,"

I am able to testify to the minute truthfulness of the picture, and to the wonderful skill shown by the poet in seizing and depicting those particulars which are most characteristic of the place. He speaks, for instance, of the "humid" corridors, and the epithet is not only applicable to the corridors, but also to the rooms, or cells, in which you have to sleep. The "silent courts" where the "splashing icy fountains play;" the cowl'd forms that "ghostlike brush by in gleaming white;" the chapel "where no organ peal invests the stern and naked prayer;" the library, garden, and wooden bed "which shall their coffin be, when dead,"—these are, indeed, the main features of the monastery; but there is another which finds no place in the poem, and which

Matthew Arnold has entirely omitted to record. I refer to the fact that the stolid, inane, soulless expression of the majority of the monks, as you pass them in the corridors, indicates only too plainly that the brain which is not used, and the mind which is never exercised, after a while loses its power and becomes idiotic. Whether this unnatural and deplorable incarceration of the spirit in a "living tomb" ever results in raving paroxysms of insanity I know not, but there is no doubt as regards its producing something akin to idiocy. It does, therefore, appear to me that this poem, though perfect as a work of art, is not a complete and truthful record, and moreover discusses and dallies with a thing of evil, a *maison du diable*, without uttering any censure or word of condemnation.

The most popular of a poet's compositions is not usually the best, yet "The Forsaken Merman" is not only the most popular, but it is also, in many respects, the most perfect work that M. Arnold composed. "It is," writes one of his earliest critics in the *Westminster Review*, "perhaps as beautifully finished as anything of the kind in the English language. The story is exquisitely told, and word and metre so carefully chosen, that the harmony of sound and meaning is perfect." It is in this poem, in "The Scholar Gipsy," and "Thyrsis," and in "Empedocles on Etna" that we find the finest work, the most satisfying and complete, with which this poet has enriched our poetic literature. Poems like "Balder Dead," "Sohrab and Rustum," and "Tristram and Iseult," excellent as they are, nevertheless do not delight us to the same extent. "Thyrsis," a monody to commemorate the author's friend

Arthur Hugh Clough, is far preferable, and, indeed is not surpassed by either Milton's *Lycidas* or Shelley's *Adonaïs*. How excellent, for example, are the last three stanzas,—quoted for convenience on page 108. Hardly less admirable, moreover, is the *in memoriam* poem on the late Dean Stanley. "He was told by a friend," writes Lord Coleridge, "that his poem on Arthur Stanley was by no means equal to the one on Arthur Clough; that they were something analogous to the 'Ode on Immortality' and the 'Ode on the Powers of Sound'; one an inspiration, the other an excellent piece of literary work. 'Ah!' he said, with a calm smile, 'you are quite wrong; one is as good as the other, only you don't care for Stanley as you do for Clough.'" Of course it is unnecessary to state that if there is one man that has ever lived for whom we *do* care and love and reverence that man is Arthur Stanley; but the lines to his memory are unequal, some of the stanzas being exceedingly fine, while others are only mediocre, and the poem as a whole is not so perfect as "Thyrsis."

It has been said, and we think with much truth, that the unmistakable mark of genius is as often manifest in a poet's shorter poems as it is in the more lengthy compositions. Landor's *Rose Aylmer*, Wordsworth's *She Dwelt Among the Untrodden Ways*, and Shelley's *To a Skylark* are examples that may be referred to, and to these must be added M. Arnold's "Dover Beach,"—a poem plainly indicating the touch of a master's hand. And there are others among his shorter poems that also bear the author's sign-manual, and will carry his name down to far distant generations. I may

especially mention "Morality," "Pis-Aller," "The Last Word," "Too Late," and the lines in "Bacchanalia, or the New Age," beginning—

"Loitering and leaping,
 With saunter, with bounds—
 Flickering and circling
 In files and in rounds—
 Gaily their pine-staff green
 Tossing in air,
 Loose o'er their shoulders white
 Showering their hair—
 See! the wild Mænads
 Break from the wood,
 Youth and Iacchus
 Maddening their blood!
 See! through the quiet land
 Rioting they pass—
 Fling the fresh heaps about,
 Trample the grass!
 Tear from the rifled hedge
 Garlands, their prize;
 Fill with their sports the field,
 Fill with their cries!"

* * * *

In another manner the lines "To a Gipsy Child by the Sea-shore," "subtile, sweet, mournful," have a pathetic and solemn beauty of their own.

And now there remains but one other section of his poetry of which it is necessary to speak, and that is the sonnets. They are not numerous; for, as in the case of those by Milton, there are only about twenty sonnets written by Arnold. But even to repeat their titles is to declare their excellence and to proclaim their immortality:—"Monica's Last Prayer," "The Good Shepherd with the Kid," "East London," "Quiet Work," "Immortality," "The Better Part," "Worldly Place," "Austerity of

Poetry," "To a Friend," "Shakespeare," "Rachel," etc. How shall we rank them in respect of those by other poets? Shall we place them above or below those by Dante, Milton, and Wordsworth? I myself should be disposed to place them on the same level, but it is possible that posterity may decide that I am wrong, and may place them above the sonnets referred to.

For many years before his death, M. Arnold lived at Painshill Cottage, Cobham. It is a pleasant residence—quiet, and in all respects well fitted to be the home of a poet. Through the meadows below glides the river Mole; the lawn is still adorned by the beautiful golden holly of which the poet was so proud; and at the end of the lawn is the tomb of his favourite dachshund "Geist," whose successor, "Maximilian," afterwards reigned in his stead. But he whose memory consecrates the scene, he who here lived and wrote his last poems and prose essays, now lies in the quiet churchyard at Laleham, where he was buried on April 19th, 1888. The memorable occasion of his funeral was one not soon to be forgotten. Among those present were Robert Browning, Sir Edwin Arnold, and Professor Lecky; and in the churchyard, the rain falling on his venerable snow-white hair, there stood by my side, I remember, Dr. Jowett, the Master of Balliol, the service being read by Dean Bradley and Archdeacon Farrar. These facts are mentioned inasmuch as fifty years hence they may be of even greater interest than they are at the present time, while most of those referred to are still with us.

The statement that Matthew Arnold was a great poet may be questioned by some critics, but no one

will deny that the author of "Literature and Dogma" was a "brave soldier in the Liberation-war of humanity." Such, we know, was the title that Heinrich Heine proudly claimed for himself. It is not, however, to Heine that we should liken Matthew Arnold, but rather to Erasmus,—and he was of a different and now far distant age. Yet all three were as brave soldiers fighting against the Philistines of their day. They are with us no longer; and as we stand watching for the advent of another Prometheus, we seem to hear, far off, the poet singing along the uplands —

"Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow,
And faint the city gleams;
Rare the lone pastoral huts; marvel not thou!
The solemn peaks but to the stars are known,
But to the stars, and the cold lunar beams;
Alone the sun arises, and alone
Spring the great streams."

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

COME, dear children, let us away ;
Down and away below !
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow,
Now the salt tides seaward flow ;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away !
This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—
Call once yet !
In a voice that she will know :
“ Margaret ! Margaret ! ”
Children’s voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother’s ear :
Children’s voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again !
Call her once and come away ;
This way, this way !
“ Mother dear, we cannot stay !
The wild, white horses foam and fret.”
Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down ;
Call no more !
One last look at the white-wall’d town,

And the little grey church on the windy shore ;
Then come down !
She will not come though you call all day ;
Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail, and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye ?
When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ;
She said, " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.

"Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman! here with thee."
I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves!"
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay,
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan;
Long prayers," I said, "in the world, they say;
Come!" I said; and we rose through the surf in the
bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd
town;
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with
rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded
panes.
She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here!
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone;
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down !
Down to the depths of the sea !
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings : " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy !
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well ;
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun !"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the spindle drops from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still.
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,
And over the sand at the sea ;
And her eyes are set in a stare ;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh ;
For the cold, strange eyes of a little Mermaiden
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children ;
Come, children, come down !
The hoarse wind blows colder ;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door ;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,

A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing : " Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she !
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low,
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom,
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town,
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing : " There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she !
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

THYRSIS.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

(CONCLUDING STANZAS.)

THOU too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast bound ;
Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour !

Men gave thee nothing ; but this happy quest ;
If men esteem'd thee feeble, gave thee power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave thee rest,
And this rude Cumner ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet fields,
Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful time,
Here was thine height of strength, thy golden prime !
And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields.

What though the music of thy rustic flute
Kept not for long its happy, country tone ;
Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,
Which task'd thy pipe too sore, and tired thy throat—
It fail'd, and thou wast mute !
Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
And long with men of care thou couldst not stay,
And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
Left human haunt, and on alone till night.

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here !

'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,
Thyrsis ! in reach of sheep-bells is my home.
—Then through the great town's harsh, heart-wearying roar
Let in thy voice a whisper often come,
To chase fatigue and fear :

Why faintest thou ? I wander'd till I died.

Roam on ! The light we sought is shining still.

*Dost thou ask proof ? Our tree yet crowns the hill.
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hill-side.*

William Cory.

1823—1892.

WILLIAM CORY, the author of "*Ionica*," was born on the 9th of January, 1823. He was the son of Mr. Charles Johnson, of Torrington, Devon, by Theresa Furse, a great-niece of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and was himself known by the name of William Johnson for the greater part of his life. He was educated on the Foundation at Eton, was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, where he obtained as much classical distinction as was possible under the peculiar regulations then in force; returned to Eton as assistant-master about 1847, and remained there till 1871. He was known to many generations of Etonians as a most original and stimulating teacher, and as an ardent educational reformer. Among his pupils were Lords Halifax, Lyttelton, Pembroke, Winchelsea, and Rosebery, Sir F. Pollock, Mr. E. Lyulph Stanley, Mr. Herbert Paul, and Mr. W. H. Gladstone. The first edition of "*Ionica*" was published in 1858, semi-anonymously, so to speak, the title being so chosen as to suggest his then surname of Johnson. Under the name of Johnson he also published three school-books—"*Nuces: Exercises in the Syntax of the Public School Latin Primer*" (1867-70); "*Lucretilis: an Introduction to the Art of Writing Latin Lyric Verses*" (1871); and "*Iophon: an Introduction to the Art of Writing*"

Greek Iambic Verses" (1873). Shortly after his retirement from Eton, he took the name of Cory, and published under that name, in two parts, his "Guide to Modern English History" (1880-82).

"Ionica" attracted little attention on its first publication, but has since won its way quietly into recognition, copies having become the subject of keen competition among bibliographers at auction sales. In 1891 a new edition was published, still anonymously, comprising nearly all the poems of the original work, together with some which had been printed for private circulation in the interim and a few pieces which had not appeared before. This volume met with more attention at the hands of the critics. The poems were said to display "a classic grace not unworthy of Landor"; to be "the life-fruit of a mind richly stored, and of an ear familiar with the harmonies of the earlier poets"; to "evinces throughout culture, wide sympathy, and genuine feeling," and to be characterised by "the refinement of the scholar and the imagination of the poet." He died on the 11th of June, 1892.

"Mimnermus in Church" is one of the best known of Mr. Cory's poems. The following translation, "Heraclitus," has also often been quoted:—

"They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to
I wept, as I remembered, how often you and I [shed.
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky.

"And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take."

ALFRED H. MILES.

IONICA.

WILLIAM CORY.

I.—A DIRGE.

NAIAD, hid beneath the bank
By the willowy river-side,
Where Narcissus gently sank,
Where unmarried Echo died,
Unto thy serene repose
Waft the stricken Anterôs.

Where the tranquil swan is borne,
Imaged in a watery glass,
Where the sprays of fresh pink thorn
Stoop to catch the boats that pass,
Where the earliest orchis grows,
Bury thou fair Anterôs.

Glide we by, with prow and oar :
Ripple shadows off the wave,
And reflected on the shore
Haply play about the grave.
Folds of summer-light enclose
All that once was Anterôs.

On a flickering wave we gaze,
Not upon his answering eyes :
Flower and bird we scarce can praise
Having lost his sweet replies :
Cold and mute the river flows
With our tears for Anterôs.

II.—MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH.

YOU promise heavens free from strife,
Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
So sweet, I fain would breathe it still;
Your chilly stars I can forego,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
One great reality above:
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
And child-like hide myself in love:
Show me what angels feel. Till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal quires,
Unwearied voices, wordless strains:
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them, is because they die.

III.—AN INVOCATION.

I NEVER prayed for Dryads, to haunt the woods
again ;
More welcome were the presence of hungering,
thirsting men,
Whose doubts we could unravel, whose hopes we
could fulfil,
Our wisdom tracing backward, the river to the
rill ;
Were such beloved forerunners one summer day
restored,
Then, then we might discover the Muse's mystic
hoard.

Oh, dear divine Comatas, I would that thou and I
Beneath this broken sunlight this leisure day might
lie ;
Where trees from distant forests, whose names were
strange to thee,
Should bend their amorous branches within thy reach
to be,
And flowers thine Hellas knew not, which art hath
made more fair,
Should shed their shining petals upon thy fragrant
hair.

Then thou shouldst calmly listen with ever-changing
looks
To songs of younger minstrels and plots of modern
books,
And wonder at the daring of poets later born,

Whose thoughts are unto thy thoughts as noon-tide
is to morn ;
And little shouldst thou grudge them their greater
strength of soul,
Thy partners in the torch-race, though nearer to the
goal.

As when ancestral portraits look gravely from the
walls
Upon the youthful baron who treads their echoing
halls ;
And whilst he builds new turrets, the thrice ennobled
heir
Would gladly wake his grandsire his home and feast
to share ;
So from Ægean laurels that hide thine ancient urn
I fain would call thee hither, my sweeter lore to
learn.

Or in thy cedarn prison thou waitest for the bee :
Ah, leave that simple honey, and take thy food from
me.
My sun is stooping westward. Entrancèd dreamer,
haste :
There's fruitage in my garden, that I would have thee
taste.
Now lift the lid a moment : now, Dorian shepherd,
speak :
Two minds shall flow together, the English and the
Greek.

William Brighty Rands.

1823—1880.

WILLIAM B. RANDS, who is better known to the English public by the pseudonyms of "Henry Holbeach," "Matthew Browne," "Timon Fieldmouse," and the author of "*Lilliput Levée*" than by his own name, was born in the year 1823. His parents were far from affluent; and the boy, though he received as good an education as they could afford, was early placed in a warehouse. His youthful upbringing was of the strict dissenting kind,—a fact which he has himself faithfully reflected in many places—notably in a very original story which he wrote in the *Argosy*, entitled "*Shoemaker's Village*," a work full of humour, character, and self-revelation of the most whimsical kind. He remained in the warehouse for some years—a fact which has record in the dedication of his original and suggestive volume "*Views and Opinions*," to Mr. G. B. Carr and all friends round St. Paul's, with unforgetting affection, and in presence of a gift to the writer which was in 1854 inscribed by seven kind comrades with an assurance of "their desire to hold and to be held by him long in 'sweet remembrance.'" But while so employed he devoted much time to study and observation of life and manners, laying up a store only a portion of which he ever turned to literary account. In early manhood

he printed a volume of poems, to which he attached his own name. Of this he disliked much to hear anything in later years, regarding it as crude, and in technical points unsatisfactory. So sensitive was he on the point that on one occasion (for it was my privilege to know him in later years), when I had allowed it to appear that I had lighted on the thin slip of a volume, he cried "Heavens! you don't mean that you have seen *it*—let me implore *you* to keep it a secret and tell no one else." There is more of the man's character in this than might at first appear. He was ever seeking avenues of expression for himself, and yet was ever retreating from open acknowledgment of it. "Henry Holbeach," for example, was the name taken by one Rands when he became monk of Crowland about 1520. The student of ecclesiastical history might thus very easily have translated "Henry Holbeach" back into Rands. He had an idea that he was burdened with the message of a reformer—that personal liberty in certain aspects could only be sufficiently secured by a complete revolution in the ideas of Government and its action. Before J. Stuart Mill published his "Liberty," Rands had in every corner open to him been proclaiming the same principles with exaggeration and emphasis, and they were very apt to look at you, as with the tail of the eye, in essays and articles that professed to be only playful or half-playful, as in some of those in "Views and Opinions." The matter comes to much more definite scientific expression in the letters addressed to eminent men, which mainly form the two volumes titled "Henry Holbeach," and in articles in the *Contemporary Review* and else-

where on such subjects as the "Moral Criteria," for with his keen intellect this matter somehow came not seldom to connect itself in his mind with apparently remote subjects, if he could at all feel that he had a free hand.

When a young man Mr. Rands studied stenography, and by-and-by he procured an appointment as one of the reporters in the Committee Rooms of the House of Commons—an appointment which he held almost up to the end. This work put him in command of such a mass of facts on almost every conceivable subject, that he was a very awkward person to engage with in controversy, even on many practical subjects. But his determinations were towards literature: he wrote for many years "The Literary Lounger" in the *Illustrated Times*; contributed stories of much grace and humour to "Tom Hood's Comic Annual"; wrote extensively in *Good Words* and the *Argosy*; and is known to many, who otherwise have no knowledge of him, as the author of that admirable book—full of research and marked by fine insight and literary skill—"Chaucer's England," published by Messrs. Hurst & Blackett in 1869. He died in 1880.

He had a peculiar power in writing fairy-tales with a fine flavour of parable and deeper meaning; and he had a whim of publishing one such duly signed with his own name every year at Christmas, the only things to which he did put his own name. Some of them he reprinted in his volume entitled "Lilliput Legends"; and two of them—"Dorothea," and "Silver Sail and the Carrier Pigeon"—are such as Tieck or Hawthorne might have written, though Rands owed little to any model.

But it is as a poet that we must specially regard him. He had a beautiful fancy, keen love of nature, and an exquisite sense of the music of words. Some of the last poems he produced—those, namely, which he inserted in the volume entitled “Lilliput Lectures”—are perhaps as beautiful as anything he wrote,—clear, simple, sweet, they suggest many ideas, yet never fail in the following out of an idea purely as such. He could be fantastic, playful, extravagant almost, yet always preserved a certain grave, sweet dignity of manner. In some of these poems there is a mixture of questioning mysticism, and simplicity such as we seek in vain elsewhere, save in some of the happiest of William Blake’s lyrics.

His love of nature, as I have said, was intense: some of his nature-poems included in his volumes for children are exquisite alike for sympathy, for rhythm, for rounded completeness, and a finish in which there is no hint of over-elaboration. You feel, as it were, the gentle winds stealing through them, wafting scents from garden, grove, or bean-field. His verse is always childlike, but never childish; touched with meditative semi-mystical thought, but never either pedantic or didactic; fanciful, playful, even funny, but never silly or merely extravagant; moving to laughter, but never boisterous; whilst on occasion he can be very tender and pathetic. His place among the poets for the young is secure; and had he done no more than write that one lyric, “Beautiful World,” he would have claimed remembrance as a true and suggestive poet.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

LILLIPUT LEVEE.

1864.

WILLIAM BRIGHTY RANDS.

I.—PUBLIC NOTICE.

PUBLIC NOTICE.—*This is to state,
That these are the specimens left at the gate
Of Pinafore Palace, exact to date,
In the hands of the porter, Curlypate,
Who sits in his plush on a chair of state,
By the gentleman who is a candidate
For the office of LILLIPUT LAUREATE.*

Christmas, 1864.

II.—STALKY JACK.

I KNEW a boy who took long walks,
Who lived on beans and ate the stalks;
To the Giant's Country he lost his way;
They kept him there for a year and a day,
But he has not been the same boy since;
An alteration he did evince;
For you may suppose that he underwent
A change in his notions of extent!

He looks with contempt on a nice high door,
And tries to walk in at the second floor;
He stares with surprise at a basin of soup,
He fancies a bowl as large as a hoop;
He calls the people minikin mites;
He calls a sirloin a couple of bites!
Things having come to these pretty passes,
They bought him some magnifying glasses.

He put on the goggles, and said, "My eyes!
The world has come to its proper size!"

But all the boys cry, "Stalky John !
There you go with your goggles on !"
What girl would marry him—and *quite* right—
To be taken for three times her proper height ?
So this comes of taking extravagant walks,
And living on beans and eating the stalks !

III.—PETRONELLA.

THE STONE STRAWBERRY GIRL.

I.

"O HASTEN, fair granddaughter, Petronell !
Follow me quick, by dingle and dell !
It is time for church ; loud rings the bell—
Ding, dong, do you hear the bell ?"

Now why do you linger, sweet maid, this day ?
Your playmates, all in their best array,
Make haste to the church. They sing, they pray,—
The *Quam dilecta* now they say ;

Your grandame kneels in the choir alone ;
Soft as a pillow she finds the stone,
For the thoughts that she thinks are not her own—
Oh, sweetly the choristers intone !

The shepherd-boys that love Petronell
Sit wondering after her. Was it well
That she did not follow the sweet church bell ?
Ding, dong, the happy bell !

II.

As Petronell in her chamber stood
She had a thought that was not good ;
She longed for the strawberries in the wood—
Strawberries red, in the green wild wood !

To the wood she ran, and lingered there,
Till the people came from the place of prayer ;
They passed rebuking : " I do not care ! "

Petronella says, tossing her hair.

Up came her grandame, tottering alone :
" Would God the child were an innocent stone,
And not a sinner ! " She died with a groan ;
Oh, then, what a wonderful thing was shown !

Fair Petronella was seen no more,
And a little stone crag, moss-grown before,
The image of Petronella bore—
Oh, the wild strawberries clasped it o'er !

III.

Now year by year, the people tell
Of the maid that slighted the sweet church bell,
The Stone Strawberry Girl, Petronell—
Ah, little maid, what a dreadful spell !

But is there a boy who never thought,
At prayers or at psalms, but the thing he ought ?
By him the spell may be unwrought—
Oh, where may that happy boy be caught ?

He must go, to the sound of the sweet church bell,—
And kiss the little stone Petronell—
That will dissolve the dreadful spell,
And the maid will wake, saying, " Well a day, well ! "

I fear that Petronell must stay
Shut up in stone for many a day ;
But if that little boy can find his way
To the poor Stone Strawberry Girl—he may.

IV.—TOPSYTURVEY-WORLD.

IF the butterfly courted the bee,
And the owl the porcupine ;
If churches were built in the sea,
And three times one was nine ;
If the pony rode his master,
If the buttercups ate the cows,
If the cat had the dire disaster
To be worried, sir, by the mouse ;
If mamma, sir, sold the baby
To a gipsy for half a crown ;
If a gentleman, sir, was a lady,—
The world would be Upside-Down !
If any of all these wonders
Should ever come about,
I should not consider them blunders,
For I should be Inside-Out !

(Chorus.)

Ba-ba, black wool,
Have you any sheep ?
Yes, sir, a pack-full,
Creep, mouse, creep !
Four-and-twenty little maids
Hanging out the pie,
Out jumped the honey-pot,
Guy-Fawkes, Guy !
Cross latch, cross latch,
Sit and spin the fire,
When the pie was opened,
The bird was on the brier !

V.—POLLY.

BROWN eyes,
Straight nose ;
Dirt pies,
Rumpled clothes ;

Torn books,
Spoilt toys ;
Arch looks,
Unlike a boy's ;

Little rages
Obvious arts ;
(Three her age is,)
Cakes, tarts ;

Falling down
Off chairs ;
Breaking crown
Down stairs ;

Catching flies
On the pane ;
Deep sighs,—
Cause not plain ;

Bribing you
With kisses
For a few
Farthing blisses ;

Wide awake,
As you hear,
“ Mercy's sake,
Quiet dear ! ”

New shoes,
New frock ;
Vague views
Of what's o'clock

When it's time
To go to bed,
And scorn sublime
For what is said ;

Folded hands,
Saying prayers,
Understands
Not, nor cares ;

Thinks it odd,
Smiles away ;
Yet may God
Hear her pray !

Bedgown white
Kiss Dolly ;
Good night !—
That's Polly.

Fast asleep,
As you see ;
Heaven keep
My girl for me !

LILLIPUT LECTURES.

1871.

WILLIAM BRIGHTY RANDS.

I.—BEAUTIFUL WORLD.

GREAT, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully drest.

The wonderful air is over me,
And the wonderful wind is shaking the tree,
It walks on the water, and whirls the mills,
And talks to itself on the top of the hills.

You friendly Earth ! how far do you go,
With the wheat-fields that nod and the rivers that
 flow,
With cities and gardens, and cliffs, and isles,
And people upon you for thousands of miles ?

Ah, you are so great, and I am so small,
I tremble to think of you, World, at all ;
And yet, when I said my prayers to-day,
A whisper inside me seemed to say,
‘You are more than the Earth, though you are such
 a dot :
You can love and think, and the Earth cannot !’

II.—INTO THE SKIES.

I INTO the skies, one summer's day,
I sent a little Thought away ;
Up to where, in the blue round,
The sun sat shining without sound.

Then my Thought came back to me,
Little Thought, what did you see
In the regions whence you come ?
And when I spoke my Thought was dumb.

But she breathed of what was there,
In the pure bright upper air ;
And, because my Thought so shone,
I knew she had been shone upon.

Next, by night a Thought I sent
Up into the firmament ;
When the eager stars were out,
And the still moon shone about.

And my Thought went past the moon,
In between the stars, but soon
Held her breath and durst not stir,
For the fear that covered her ;
Then she thought, in this demur :

' Dare I look beneath the shade,
Into where the worlds are made ;
Where the suns and stars are wrought ?
Shall I meet another Thought ?

‘ Will that other Thought have wings ?
Shall I meet strange, heavenly things ?
Thought of Thoughts, and Light of Lights,
Breath of Breaths, and Night of Nights ? ’

Then my Thought began to hark
In the illuminated dark,
Till the silence, over, under,
Made her heart beat more than thunder.

And my Thought came trembling back,
But with something on her track,
And with something at her side ;
Nor till she has lived and died,
Lived and died, and lived again,
Will that awful thing seem plain.

III.—THE LAD AND LASS.

THE lad and lass were forced to part,
They kissed and went along ;
The sight went into the poet’s heart,
And it came out a song.

The sun, down-sloping in the west,
Made gold the evening air ;
The sight went into the painter’s breast,
And grew to a picture fair.

The mother murmured to her child,
And hushed it yet again ;
The sound, as the musician smiled,
Grew music in his brain.

The damsel turned her hair to bind,
A flower was in her zone ;
There grew from out the sculptor’s mind,
A damsel carved in stone.

The song was said, the tune was played,
The girl in marble stood,
The sunset in the picture stayed,
And all was sweet and good.

And God who made these things to be,
The damsel and the sun,
Colour and sound, and you and me,
Was pleased to see it done ;

And all the angels would be glad
If, in the world He built,
Although there must be some things sad,
No drop of joy were spilt.

But all the beauty in the earth,
And skies, and hearts of men,
Were gently gathered at its birth,
And loved, and born again.

IV.—I SAW THE BEAUTY.

I SAW the beauty of the world
Before me like a flag unfurled,
The splendour of the morning sky,
And all the stars in company ;
I thought, how beautiful it is !—
My soul said, There is more than this.

I saw the pomps of death and birth,
The generations of the earth ;
I looked on saints and heroes crowned,
And love as wide as heaven is round ;
I thought, How wonderful it is !—
My soul said, There is more than this.

Sometimes I have an awful thought
That bids me do the thing I ought,
It comes like wind, it burns like flame,
How shall I give that thought a name ?
It draws me like a loving kiss—
My soul says, There is more than this.

I dreamed an angel of the Lord,
With purple wings and golden sword,
And such a splendour in his face
As made a glory in the place ;
I thought, How beautiful he is !—
My soul said, There is more than this.

That angel's Lord I cannot see
Or hear, but He is Lord to me ;
And in the heavens, and earth, and skies,—
The good which lives till evil dies,—
The love which I cannot withstand,—
God writes His name with His own hand.

V.—I SAW A NEW WORLD.

I SAW a new world in my dream,
Where all the folks alike did seem :
There was no Child, there was no Mother,
There was no Change, there was no Other.

For everything was Same, the Same ;
There was no praise, there was no blame ;
There was neither Need nor Help for it ;
There was nothing fitting, or unfit.

Nobody laughed, nobody wept ;
None grew weary, so none slept ;
There was nobody born, and nobody wed ;
This world was a world of the living-dead.

I longed to hear the Time-Clock strike
In the world where the people were all alike ;
I hated Same, I hated For-Ever,
I longed to say Neither, or even Never.

I longed to mend, I longed to make,
I longed to give, I longed to take,
I longed for a change, whatever came after,
I longed for crying, I longed for laughter.

At last I heard the Time-Clock boom,
And woke from my dream in my little room ;
With a smile on her lips my mother was nigh,
And I heard the Baby crow and cry.

And I thought to myself, How nice it is
For me to live in a world like this,
Where things can happen, and clocks can strike,
And none of the people are made alike ;

Where Love wants this, and Pain wants that,
Where all our hearts want Tit for Tat
In the jumbles we make with our heads and our
 hands,
In a world that nobody understands.
But with work, and hope, and the right to call
Upon Him who sees it and knows us all.

Coventry Patmore.

1823.

COVENTRY PATMORE, the son of a man of letters who had been the intimate friend of Hazlitt, was born at Woodford, in Essex, July 23rd, 1823. He was educated privately, and in 1844 made his first appearance as an author, in a little volume of poems of striking originality, but as unequal in conception and execution as the early work of Tennyson. He shortly afterwards obtained an appointment as assistant librarian in the British Museum, which enabled him, while deserving the character of one of the most industrious men in the establishment, to devote much spare time to literature. After a preliminary essay in "Tamerton Church Tower" (1853) —a more polished, but less interesting performance than his early attempts, he published in 1854 the first part of "The Angel in the House"; the prelude to an intended poem on married life, but not proceeding beyond the "Betrothal," and virtually a celebration of the lady whom all who remember her will unite with her laureate in declaring an epitome of the graces and perfections of womankind. "The Espousals" succeeded in 1856; and less happy aspects of "the old, old story" were subsequently depicted in "Faithful for Ever" and "The Victories of Love." Shortly after his wife's death in 1862, Mr. Patmore retired from the British Museum, and

has of late years lived at Hastings. Two volumes of lyrics, "The Unknown Eros" (1877), and "Amelia" (1878), if not more beautiful than "The Angel in the House," indicate a range of thought and a mastery of metrical effect which, though not surprising to those acquainted with the author's striking personality, would not have been inferred from the domesticity and simple versification of his earlier writings. Mr. Patmore, indeed, is a connoisseur of metre and rhythm, and has written upon them much too technically for the edification of the general public. A little volume of literary criticism, reprinted from the *St. James's Gazette*, reveals a clear perception of the eternal laws of art and remarkable acuteness in their application to special cases; impaired, we cannot but think, by political and other prejudice, and an unfortunate disposition to give ear to *Der Geist der stets verneint*; the father, indeed, of all criticism.

Coventry Patmore is a not unusual instance of the poet who, setting out to achieve one object, has achieved another. He was to have been the poet of married life, and the poem by which he will always be chiefly known was merely to have preluded a more ambitious work on a theme comparatively new to poets. The undertaking was never carried out, for the simple reason that, though married life is a very great subject, it is not a very poetical one. The exceptional experience of a married pair may afford a very good subject for a poem; but married life in the abstract is best treated in prose. Before Mr. Patmore made this discovery, he had done enough for fame by uttering, on the general theme of poets, things wiser and deeper, simpler and

sweeter, than many have found voice for. "The Angel in the House" is a treasury of exquisite sayings, weighty counsels, descriptions exquisite in their loveliness and photographic in their accuracy, and similes startling in their novelty and quaintness. "Faithful for Ever" is nearly as good, and might have been quite as good if the metre had lent itself equally to the author's polished sententiousness. "The Victories of Love" demanded too much from the imagination. Mr. Patmore's muse is only at home in this world. His besetting fault, a tendency to lapse into the prosaic, is amended in "The Unknown Eros," "Amelia," and his later lyrical compositions in general. Here the splendid metrical form bears the writer up; it is hardly possible to set any but exalted thoughts to such refined music. There is still, however, a snare which the author has not been able to escape. He should eschew religious and political controversy; not because such subjects are in themselves unsuited for poetry, but because he seems constitutionally incapable of handling them in any but a polemical spirit, which, from a poet's point of view, is as bad as a prosaic one. His invectives want dignity, as the weak parts of "The Angel in the House" wanted elevation. When all is said, it may be affirmed that no poet of the present age is more certain of immortality than Patmore, for in none is the substructure of fame more solid. His taste may sometimes be at fault; but he is thoroughly sound as regards all essentials. You will not find in him a vestige of inaccuracy, a trace of mental slovenliness, a word which does not fit the thought, or a picture which is not correct to the minutest particulars. In very many respects he

resembles Crabbe, and when he shall have taken his definite rank on the roll of English poets, we imagine that the two will not be found separated by any wide interval. In two respects, however, to say nothing of his infinitely wider range as a metrist, Mr. Patmore goes distinctly beyond Crabbe—the power of graceful personification which invests the material or the merely physical with an ideal life; and the rarer gift of revealing, by a sudden flash of insight, qualities hitherto unsuspected in familiar things. How beautiful, for instance, is this representation of the wandering breeze as an intelligent and sentient being!

“In dim recesses hyacinths drooped,
And breadths of primrose cooled the air,
Which, wandering through the woodland, stooped,
And gathered perfume here and there.”

We have all seen a stone enveloped by lush grass; but who before Mr. Patmore recognised an emblem in it of neglect provoking an intenser tenderness?

“Through passionate duty love flames higher,
As grass grows taller round a stone.

These felicities are not among the greatest things in poetry, but the greatest things could not more unanswerably evince endowment with “the vision and the faculty divine.”

RICHARD GARNETT.

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

1885.

COVENTRY PATMORE.

I.

THE POET'S CONFIDENCE.

(FROM "THE PROLOGUE," BOOK I.)

THE richest realm of all the earth
Is counted still a heathen land :
Lo, I, like Joshua, now go forth
To give it into Israel's hand.
I will not hearken blame or praise ;
For so should I dishonour do
To that sweet Power by which these Lays
Alone are lovely, good, and true ;
Nor credence to the world's cries give,
Which ever preach and still prevent
Pure passion's high prerogative
To make, not follow, precedent.
From love's abysmal ether rare
If I to men have here made known
New truths, they, like new stars, were there
Before, though not yet written down.
Moving but as the feelings move,
I run, or loiter with delight,
Or pause to mark where gentle Love
Persuades the soul from height to height.
Yet, know ye, though my words are gay
As David's dance, which Michal scorn'd,
If kindly you receive the Lay,
You shall be sweetly help'd and warn'd.

II.

THE VIOLETS.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO V.)

1.

I WENT not to the Dean's unbid :
I would not have my mystery,
From her so delicately hid,
The guess of gossips at their tea.
A long, long week, and not once there,
Had made my spirit sick and faint,
And lack-love, foul as love is fair,
Perverted all things to complaint.
How vain the world had grown to be !
How mean all people and their ways,
How ignorant their sympathy,
And how impertinent their praise ;
What they for virtuousness esteem'd,
How far removed from heavenly right ;
What pettiness their trouble seem'd,
How undelightful their delight ;
To my necessity how strange
The sunshine and the song of birds ;
How dull the clouds' continual change,
How foolishly content the herds ;
How unaccountable the law
Which bade me sit in blindness here,
While she, the sun by which I saw,
Shed splendour in an idle sphere !
And then I kiss'd her stolen glove,
And sigh'd to reckon and define
The modes of martyrdom in love,
And how far each one might be mine.
I thought how love, whose vast estate
Is earth and air and sun and sea,

Encounters oft the beggar's fate,
Despised on score of poverty ;
How Heaven, inscrutable in this,
Lets the gross general make or mar
The destiny of love, which is
So tender and particular ;
How nature, as unnatural
And contradicting nature's source,
Which is but love, seems most of all
Well-pleased to harry true love's course ;
How, many times, it comes to pass
That trifling shades of temperament,
Affecting only one, alas,
Not love, but love's success prevent ;
How manners often falsely paint
The man ; how passionate respect,
Hid by itself, may bear the taint
Of coldness and a dull neglect ;
And how a little outward dust
Can a clear merit quite o'ercloud,
And make her fatally unjust,
And him desire a darker shroud ;
How senseless opportunity
Gives baser men the better chance ;
How powers, adverse else, agree
To cheat her in her ignorance ;
How Heaven its very self conspires
With man and nature against love,
As pleased to couple cross desires,
And cross where they themselves approve.
Wretched were life, if the end were now !
But this gives tears to dry despair,
Faith shall be blest, we know not how,
And love fulfill'd, we know not where.

II.

While thus I grieved, and kiss'd her glove,
My man brought in her note to say,
Papa had bid her send his love,
And would I dine with them next day ?
They had learn'd and practised Purcell's glee,
To sing it by to-morrow night.
The Postscript was : Her sisters and she
Inclosed some violets, blue and white ;
She and her sisters found them where
I wager'd once no violets grew ;
So they had won the gloves. And there
The violets lay, two white, one blue.

III.

THE CHASE.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO XII.)

SHE wearies with an ill unknown ;
In sleep she sobs and seems to float,
A water-lily, all alone
Within a lonely castle-moat ;
And as the full moon, spectral, lies
Within the crescent's gleaming arms,
The present shows her heedless eyes
A future dim with vague alarms.
She sees, and yet she scarcely sees,
For, life-in-life not yet begun,
Too many are its mysteries
For thought to fix on any one.
She's told that maidens are by youths
Extremely honour'd and desired ;
And sighs, " If those sweet tales be truths,
What bliss to be so much admired ! "

The suitors come ; she sees them grieve ;
Her coldness fills them with despair ;
She'd pity if she could believe ;
She's sorry that she cannot care.
But who now meets her on her way ?
Comes he as enemy or friend,
Or both ? Her bosom seems to say,
He cannot pass, and there an end.
Whom does he love ? Does he confer
His heart on worth that answers his ?
Or is he come to worship her ?
She fears, she hopes, she thinks he is !
Advancing stepless, quick, and still,
As in the grass a serpent glides,
He fascinates her fluttering will,
Then terrifies with dreadful strides.
At first, there's nothing to resist ;
He fights with all the forms of peace ;
He comes about her like a mist,
With subtle, swift, unseen increase ;
And then, unlook'd for, strikes amain
Some stroke that frightens her to death,
And grows all harmlessness again,
Ere she can cry, or get her breath.
At times she stops, and stands at bay ;
But he in all, more strong than she,
Subdues her with his pale dismay,
Or more admired audacity.
She plans some final, fatal blow,
But when she means with frowns to kill,
He looks as if he loved her so,
She smiles to him against her will.
How sweetly he implies her praise !
His tender talk, his gentle tone,

The manly worship in his gaze,
They nearly make her heart his own.
With what an air he speaks her name ;
His manner always recollects
Her sex, and still the woman's claim
Is taught its scope by his respects.
Her charms, perceived to prosper first
In his beloved advertencies,
When in her glass they are rehearsed,
Prove his most powerful allies.
Ah, whither shall a maiden flee,
When a bold youth so swift pursues,
And siege of tenderest courtesy,
With hope perseverant, still renews !
Why fly so fast ? Her flatter'd breast
Thanks him who finds her fair and good ;
She loves her fears ; veil'd joys arrest
The foolish terrors of her blood :
By secret, sweet degrees, her heart,
Vanquish'd, takes warmth from his desire ;
She makes it more, with hidden art,
And fuels love's late dreaded fire.
The generous credit he accords
To all the signs of good in her
Redeems itself ; his praiseful words
The virtues they impute confer.
Her heart is thrice as rich in bliss,
She's three times gentler than before ;
He gains a right to call her his,
Now she through him is so much more ;
'Tis heaven where'er she turns her head ;
'Tis music when she talks ; 'tis air
On which, elate, she seems to tread,
The convert of a gladder sphere !

Ah, might he, when by doubts aggrieved,
Behold his tokens next her breast,
At all his words and sighs perceived
Against its blithe upheaval press'd !
But still she flies. Should she be won,
It must not be believed or thought
She yields; she's chased to death, undone,
Surprised, and violently caught.

IV.

LOVE'S PERVERSITY.

(FROM BOOK II., CANTO VI.)

How strange a thing a lover seems
To animals that do not love !
Lo, where he walks and talks in dreams,
And flouts us with his Lady's glove ;
How foreign is the garb he wears ;
And how his great devotion mocks
Our poor propriety, and scares
The undevout with paradox !
His soul, through scorn of worldly care,
And great extremes of sweet and gall,
And musing much on all that's fair,
Grows witty and fantastical ;
He sobs his joy and sings his grief,
And evermore finds such delight
In simply picturing his relief,
That 'plaining seems to cure his plight ;
He makes his sorrow, when there's none ;
His fancy blows both cold and hot ;
Next to the wish that she'll be won,
His first hope is that she may not ;
He sues, yet deprecates consent ;
Would she be captured she must fly ;

She looks too happy and content,
For whose least pleasure he would die ;
Oh, cruelty, she cannot care
For one to whom she's always kind !
He says he's nought, but, oh, despair,
If he's not Jove to her fond mind !
He's jealous if she pets a dove,
She must be his with all her soul ;
Yet 'tis a postulate in love
That part is greater than the whole ;
And all his apprehension's stress,
When he's with her, regards her hair,
Her hand, a ribbon of her dress,
As if his life were only there ;
Because she's constant, he will change,
And kindest glances coldly meet,
And, all the time he seems so strange,
His soul is fawning at her feet ;
Of smiles and simple heaven grown tired,
He wickedly provokes her tears,
And when she weeps, as he desired,
Falls slain with ecstasies of fears ;
He blames her, though she has no fault,
Except the folly to be his ;
He worships her, the more to exalt
The profanation of a kiss ;
Health's his disease ; he's never well
But when his paleness shames her rose ;
His faith's a rock-built citadel,
Its sign a flag that each way blows ;
His o'erfed fancy frets and fumes ;
And Love, in him, is fierce, like Hatc,
And ruffles his ambrosial plumes
Against the bars of time and fate.

V.

IN A WOOD.

(FROM "THE REVULSION," BOOK II., CANTO VII.)

'Twas when the spousal time of May
Hangs all the hedge with bridal wreaths,
And air's so sweet the bosom gay
Gives thanks for every breath it breathes,
When like to like is gladly moved,
And each thing joins in Spring's refrain,
"Let those love now who never loved ;
Let those who have loved love again ;"
That I, in whom the sweet time wrought,
Lay stretch'd within a lonely glade,
Abandon'd to delicious thought
Beneath the softly twinkling shade.
The leaves, all stirring, mimick'd well
A neighbouring rush of rivers cold,
And, as the sun or shadow fell,
So these were green and those were gold ;
In dim recesses hyacinths droop'd,
And breadths of primrose lit the air,
Which, wandering through the woodland, stoop'd
And gather'd perfumes here and there ;
Upon the spray the squirrel swung,
And careless songsters, six or seven,
Sang lofty songs the leaves among
Fit for their only listener, Heaven.

VI.

SENTENCES.

I.

BECOME whatever good you see,
Nor sigh if, forthwith, fades from view
The grace of which you may not be
The subject and spectator too.

II.

You love ? That's high as you shall go ;
For 'tis as true as Gospel text,
Not noble then is never so,
Either in this world or the next.

III.

Love, kiss'd by Wisdom, wakes twice Love,
And Wisdom is, thro' loving, wise.
Let Dove and Snake, and Snake and Dove,
This Wisdom's be, that Love's device.

IV.

'Tis truth (although this truth's a star
Too deep-enski'd for all to see),
As poets of grammar, lovers are
The fountains of morality.

V.

Kind souls, you wonder why, love you,
When you, you wonder why, love none.
We love, Fool, for the good we do,
Not that which unto us is done !

VI.

Endow the Fool with sun and moon,
Being his, he holds them mean and low,
But to the wise a little boon
Is great, because the giver's so.

VII.

To tryst Love blindfold goes, for fear
He should not see, and eyeless night
He chooses still for breathing near
Beauty, that lives but in the sight,

VIII.

"I saw you take his kiss!" "'Tis true."
"O modesty!" "'Twas strictly kept :
He thought me asleep ; at least, I knew
He thought I thought he thought I slept."

IX.

"I'll hunt for dangers North and South,
To prove my love, which sloth maligns!"
What seems to say her rosy mouth ?
"I'm not convinced by proofs but signs."

X.

I vow'd unvarying faith, and she,
To whom in full I pay that vow,
Rewards me with variety
Which men who change can never know.

XI.

Did first his beauty wake her sighs ?
That's Lais ! Thus Lucretia's known :
The beauty in her Lover's eyes
Was admiration of her own.

XII.

The lack of lovely pride, in her
Who strives to please, my pleasure numbs,
And still the Maid I most prefer
Whose care to please with pleasing comes.

XIII.

Who pleasure follows pleasure slays ;
God's wrath upon himself he wreaks ;
But all delights rejoice his days
Who takes with thanks, and never seeks.

XIV.

The wrong is made and measured by
The right's inverted dignity.
Change love to shame, as love is high
So low in hell your bed shall be.

FAITHFUL FOR EVER.

1860.

COVENTRY PATMORE.

(FROM BOOK III., CANTO VI.)

YOUR love lacks joy, your letter says.
Yes; love requires the focal space
Of recollection, or of hope,
E'er it can measure its own scope.
Too soon, too soon, comes Death to show
We love more deeply than we know !
The rain, that fell upon the height
Too gently to be call'd delight,
Within the dark vale reappears,
As a wild cataract of tears ;
And love in life should strive to see
Sometimes what love in death would be !
(Easier to love, we so should find,
It is, than to be just and kind !)
She's cold. Put to the coffin-lid.
What distance for another did
That death has done for her ! The good,
Once gazed upon with heedless mood,
Now fills with tears the famish'd eye,
And turns all else to vanity.
Tis sad to see, with death between,
The good we have pass'd, and have not seen !
How strong appear the words of all !
The looks of those that live appal.
They are the ghosts, and check the breath ;
There's no reality but death,
And hunger for some signal given
That we shall have our own in heaven !
But this the God of love lets be
A horrible uncertainty.

How great her smallest virtue seems,
How small her greatest fault ! Ill dreams
Were those that foil'd with loftier grace
The homely kindness of her face.
'Twas here she sat and work'd, and there
She comb'd and kiss'd the children's hair ;
Or, with one baby at her breast,
Another taught, or hush'd to rest.
Praise does the heart no more refuse
To the divinity of use.
Her humblest good is hence most high
In the heavens of fond memory ;
And Love says Amen to the word,
A prudent wife is from the Lord.
Her worst gown's kept, ('tis now the best,
As that in which she oftenest dress'd,)
For memory's sake more precious grown
Than she herself was for her own.
Poor wife ! foolish it seem'd to fly
To sobs instead of dignity,
When she was hurt. Now, more than all,
Heart-rending and angelical
That ignorance of what to do,
Bewilder'd still by wrong from you.
(For what man ever yet had grace
Ne'er to abuse his power and place ?)

No magic of her voice or smile
Raised in a trice a fairy isle,
But fondness for her underwent
An unregarded increment,
Like that which lifts, through centuries,
The coral reef within the seas,
Till, lo ! the land where was the wave.
Alas ! 'tis everywhere her grave !

THE UNKNOWN EROS.

1877.

COVENTRY PATMORE.

I.—WIND AND WAVE.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO II.)

THE wedded light and heat,
Winnowing the witless space,
Without a let,
What are they till they beat
Against the sleepy sod, and there beget
Perchance the violet!
Is the One found,
Amongst a wilderness of as happy grace,
To make Heaven's bound;
So that in Her
All which it hath of sensitively good
Is sought and understood
After the narrow mode the mighty Heavens prefer?
She, as a little breeze
Following still Night,
Ripples the spirit's cold, deep seas
Into delight;
But, in a while,
The unmeasureable smile
Is broke by fresher airs to flashes blent
With darkling discontent;
And all the subtle zephyr hurries gay,
And all the heaving ocean heaves one way,
T'ward the void sky-line and an unguess'd weal;
Until the vanward billows fee
The agitating shallows, and divine the goal,
And to foam roll,
And spread and stray
And traverse wildly, like delighted hands,
The fair and fleckless sands;

And so the whole
Unfathomable and immense
Triumphing tide comes at the last to reach
And burst in wind-kiss'd splendours on the deafning
 beach,
Where forms of children in first innocence
Laugh and fling pebbles on the rainbow'd crest
Of its untired unrest.

II.—WINTER.

(FROM BOOK I., CANTO III.)

I SINGULARLY moved
To love the lovely that are not beloved,
Of all the Seasons, most
Love Winter, and to trace
The sense of the Trophonian pallor on her face.
It is not death, but plenitude of peace ;
And the dim cloud that does the world enfold
Hath less the characters of dark and cold
Than warmth and light asleep ;
And correspondent breathing seems to keep
With the infant harvest, breathing soft below
Its eider coverlet of snow.
Nor is in field or garden anything
But, duly look'd into, contains serene
The substance of things hoped for, in the Spring,
And evidence of Summer not yet seen.
On every chance-mild day
That visits the moist shaw,
The honeysuckle, 'sdaining to be crost
In urgency of sweet life by sleet or frost,
'Voids the time's law
With still increase
Of leaflet new, and little, wandering spray ;

Often, in sheltering brakes,
As one from rest disturb'd in the first hour,
Primrose or violet bewilder'd wakes,
And deems 'tis time to flower ;
Though not a whisper of her voice he hear,
The buried bulb does know
The signals of the year,
And hails far Summer with his lifted spear.
The gorse-field dark, by sudden, gold caprice,
Turns, here and there, into a Jason's fleece ;
Lilies that, soon in Autumn, slipp'd their gowns of green
And vanish'd into earth,
And came again, ere Autumn died, to birth,
Stand full-array'd, amidst the wavering shower,
And perfect for the Summer, less the flower ;
In nook of pale or crevice of crude bark,
Thou canst not miss,
If close thou spy, to mark
The ghostly chrysalis,
That, if thou touch it, stirs in its dream dark ;
And the flush'd Robin, in the evenings hoar,
Does of Love's Day, as if he saw it, sing :
But sweeter yet than dream or song of Summer or
Spring
Are Winter's sometime smiles, that seem to well
From infancy ineffable ;
Her wandering, languorous gaze,
So unfamiliar, so without amaze,
On the elemental, chill adversity,
The uncomprehended rudeness ; and her sigh
And solemn, gathering tear,
And look of exile from some great repose, the sphere
Of ether, moved by ether only, or
By something still more tranquil.—

III.—AURAS OF DELIGHT.

(FROM BOOK II., CANTO XI.)

BEAUTIFUL habitations, auras of delight !
Who shall bewail the crags and bitter foam
And angry sword-blades flashing left and right,
Which guard your glittering height,
That none thereby may come !

The vision which we have
Revere we so,
That yet we crave
To foot those fields of ne'er profaned snow ?

I, with heart-quake,
Dreaming or thinking of that realm of Love,
See, oft, a dove
Tangled in frightful nuptials with a snake
The tortured knot,
Now, like a kite scant-weighted, flung bewitch'd
Sunwards, now pitch'd,
Tail over head, down, but with no taste got
Eternally
Of rest in either ruin or the sky,
But bird and vermin each incessant strives
With vain dilaceration of both lives,
'Gainst its abhorred bond insoluble ;
Coveting fiercer any separate hell
Than the most weary Soul in Purgatory
On God's sweet breast to lie.
And, in this sign, I con
The guerdon of that golden Cup, fulfill'd
With fornications foul of Babylon,
The heart where good is well-perceiv'd and known,
Yet is not will'd ;

And Him I thank, who can make live again
The dust, but not the joy we once profane,
That I, of ye,
Beautiful habitations, auras of delight,
In childish years, and since, had sometime sense and
sight,
But that ye vanish'd quite,
Even from memory,
Ere I could get my breath, and whisper "See!"
But did for me
They altogether die,
Those trackless glories glimps'd in upper sky?
Were they of chance, or vain,
Nor good at all again
For curb of heart or fret?
Nay, though, by grace,
Lest, haply, I refuse God to His face.
Their likeness wholly I forget,
Ah, yet,
Often in straits which else for me were ill,
I mind me still
I *did* respire the lonely auras sweet,
I *did* the blest abodes behold, and, at the mountains'
feet,
Bathed in the holy Stream by Hermon's thymy hill.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

COVENTRY PATMORE.

I.—AMELIA.

WHENE'ER mine eyes do my Amelia greet
It is with such emotion
As when, in childhood, turning a dim street,
I first beheld the ocean.

There, where the little, bright, surf-breathing town,
That show'd me first her beauty and the sea,
Gathers its skirts against the gorse-gilt down
And scatters gardens o'er the southern lea,
Abides this Maid
Within a kind, yet sombre Mother's shade,
Who of her daughter's graces seems almost afraid,
Viewing them ofttimes with a scared forecast,
Caught, haply, from obscure love-peril past.
Howe'er that be,
She scants me of my right,
Is cunning careful evermore to balk
Sweet separate talk,
And fevers my delight
By frets, if, on Amelia's cheek of peach,
I touch the notes which music cannot reach,
Bidding "Good-night!"
Wherefore it came that, till to-day's dear date,
I curs'd the weary months which yet I have to wait
Ere I find heaven, one-nested with my mate.

To-day, the Mother gave,
To urgent pleas and promise to behave
As she were there, her long-besought consent
To trust Amelia with me to the grave
Where lay my once-betrothed, Millicent:
"For," said she, hiding ill a moistening eye,
"Though, Sir, the word sounds hard,

God makes as if He least knew how to guard
The treasure He loves best, simplicity."

And there Amelia stood, for fairness shown
Like a young apple-tree, in flush'd array
Of white and ruddy flow'r, auroral, gay,
With chilly blue the maiden branch between ;
And yet to look on her moved less the mind
To say "How beauteous!" than "How good and
kind!"

And so we went alone
By walls o'er which the lilac's numerous plume
Shook down perfume ;
Trim plots close blown
With daisies, in conspicuous myriads seen,
Engross'd each one
With single ardour for her spouse, the sun ;
Garths in their glad array
Of white and ruddy branch, auroral, gay,
With azure chill the maiden flow'r between ;
Meadows of fervid green,
With sometime sudden prospect of untold
Cowslips, like chance-found gold ;
And broadcast buttercups at joyful gaze,
Rending the air with praise,
Like the six-hundred-thousand-voiced shout
Of Jacob camp'd in Midian put to rout ;
Then through the Park,
Where Spring to livelier gloom
Quickened the cedars dark,
And, 'gainst the clear sky cold,
Which shone afar
Crowded with sunny alps oracular,
Great chestnuts raised themselves abroad like cliffs
of bloom ;

And everywhere,
Amid the ceaseless rapture of the lark,
With wonder new
We caught the solemn voice of single air,
"Cuckoo !"

And when Amelia, 'bolder'd, saw and heard
How bravely sang the bird,
And all things in God's bounty did rejoice,
She who, her Mother by, spake seldom word,
Did her charm'd silence doff,
And, to my happy marvel, her dear voice
Went as a clock does, when the pendulum's off.
Ill Monarch of man's heart the Maiden who
Does not aspire to be High-Pontiff too !
So she repeated soft her Poet's line,
"By grace divine,
Not otherwise, O Nature, are we thine !"
And I, up the bright steep she led me, trod,
And the like thought pursued
With, "What is gladness without gratitude,
And where is gratitude without a God ?"
And of delight, the guerdon of His laws,
She spake, in learned mood ;
And I, of Him loved reverently, as Cause,
Her sweetly, as Occasion of all good.
Nor were we shy,
For souls in heaven that be
May talk of heaven without hypocrisy.

And now, when we drew near
The low, grey church, in its sequester'd dell,
A shade upon me fell.
Dead Millicent indeed had been most sweet
But I how little meet
To call such graces in a Maiden mine !

A boy's proud passion free affection blunts ;
His well-meant flatteries oft are blind affronts ;
And many a tear
Was Millicent's before I, manlier, knew
That maidens shine
As diamonds do,
Which, though most clear,
Are not to be seen through ;
And, if she put her virgin self aside
And sate her, crownless, at my conquering feet,
It should have bred in me humility, not pride.
Amelia had more luck than Millicent ;
Secure she smiled and warm from all mischance
Or from my knowledge or my ignorance,
And glow'd content
With my—some might have thought too much—
superior age,
Which seem'd the gage
Of steady kindness all on her intent.
Thus nought forbade us to be fully blent.
While, therefore, now
Her pensive footstep stirr'd
The darnell'd garden of unheedful death,
She ask'd what Millicent was like, and heard
Of eyes like hers, and honeysuckle breath,
And of a wiser than a woman's brow,
Yet fill'd with only woman's love, and how
An incidental greatness character'd
Her unconsider'd ways.
But all my praise
Amelia thought too slight for Millicent,
And on my lovelier-freighted arm she leant,
For more attent ;
And the tea-rose I gave,

To deck her breast, she dropp'd upon the grave.
"And this was hers," said I, decorating with a band
Of mildest pearls Amelia's milder hand.
"Nay, I will wear it for *her* sake," she said :
For dear to maidens are their rivals dead.

And so,
She seated on the black yew's tortured root,
I on the carpet of sere shreds below,
And nigh the little mound where lay that other,
I kiss'd her lips three times without dispute,
And, with bold worship suddenly aglow,
I lifted to my lips a sandall'd foot,
And kiss'd it three times thrice without dispute.
Upon my head her fingers fell like snow,
Her lamb-like hands about my neck she wreathed,
Her arms like slumber o'er my shoulders crept,
And with her bosom, whence the azalea breathed,
She did my face full favourably smother,
To hide the heaving secret that she wept !

Now would I keep my promise to her Mother ;
Now I arose, and raised her to her feet,
My best Amelia, fresh-born from a kiss,
Moth-like, full-blown in birthdew sluddering sweet,
With great, kind eyes, in whose brown shade
Bright Venus and her Baby play'd !

At inmost heart well pleased with one another,
What time the slant sun low
Through the plough'd field does each clod sharply
show,
And softly fills
With shade the dimples of our homeward hills,
With little said,
We left the 'wilder'd garden of the dead,
And gain'd the gorse-lit shoulder of the down

That keeps the north-wind from the nestling town,
And caught, once more, the vision of the wave,
Where, on the horizon's dip,
A many-sailed ship
Pursued alone her distant purpose grave ;
And, by steep steps rock-hewn, to the dim street
I led her sacred feet ;
And, so the Daughter gave,
Soft, moth-like, sweet,
Showy as damask-rose and shy as musk,
Back to her Mother, anxious in the dusk.
And now "Good-night !"
Me shall the phantom months no more affright.
For heaven's gates to open well waits he
Who keeps himself the key.

II.—THE CIRCLES.

"WITHIN yon world-wide cirque of war
What's hidden which they fight so for ?"
My guide made answer, "Rich increase
Of virtue and use, which are by peace,
And peace by war. That inner ring
Are craftsmen, working many a thing
For use, and, these within, the wise
Explore the grass and read the skies."
"Can the stars' motions give me peace,
Or the herbs' virtues mine increase ?
Of all this triple shell," said I.
"Would that I might the kernel spy !"
A narrower circle then I reach'd,
Where sang a few and many preach'd
Of life immortal. "But," I said,

“The riddle yet I have not read.
Life I must know, that care I may
For life in me to last for aye.”
Then he, “Those voices are a charm
To keep yon dove-cot out of harm.”
In the centre, then, he show’d a tent
Where, laughing safe, a woman bent
Over her babe, and, her above,
Lean’d in his turn a graver love.
“Behold the two idolatries
By which,” cried he, “the world defies
Chaos and death, and for whose sake
All else must war and work and wake.”

III.—THE BARREN SHORE.

FULL many sing to me and thee
Their riches gather’d by the sea ;
But I will sing, for I’m footsore,
The burthen of the barren shore.

The hue of love how lively shown
In this sole found cerulean stone
By twenty leagues of ocean roar.
O, burthen of the barren shore !

And these few crystal fragments bright,
As clear as truth, as strong as right,
I found in footing twenty more.
O, burthen of the barren shore !

And how far did I go for this
Small precious piece of ambergris ?
Of weary leagues I went threescore.
O, burthen of the barren shore !

The sand is poor, the sea is rich,
And I, I am I know not which ;
And well it were to know no more
The burthen of the barren shore !

IV.—THE YEAR.

THE crocus, while the days are dark,
Unfolds its saffron sheen ;
At April's touch, the crudest bark
Discovers gems of green.

Then sleep the seasons, full of might ;
While slowly swells the pod
And rounds the peach, and in the night
The mushroom bursts the sod.

The Winter falls ; the frozen rut
Is bound with silver bars ;
The snow-drift heaps against the hut,
And night is pierc'd with stars.

William Caldwell Roscoe.

1823—1859.

It is generally found in the rare cases where the poetical faculty is hereditary at all, that its stream becomes thinner with each successive transmission ; but the Roscoes afford an instance of a literary family in which the exact opposite is the case. Its founder, William Roscoe, is deservedly famous as “ the elegant historian of the Medici,” and we can still well understand a hero-worship of him, such as Washington Irving has expressed in the famous chapter of his “Sketch-Book” ; but, with the exception of one sonnet, he has left no verse which justifies a more than complimentary description of him as a poet. That exception is, of course, this sonnet “ On parting with his Books ” quoted by Irving.

“ As one, who, destined from his friends to part,
 Regrets his loss, but hopes again erewhile
 To share their converse, and enjoy their smile,
And tempers, as he may, affliction’s dart ;
Thus, loved associates, chiefs of elder art,
 Teachers of wisdom, who could once beguile
 My tedious hours, and lighten every toil ;
I now resign you ; nor with fainting heart ;

For pass a few short years, or days, or hours,
 And happier seasons may their dawn unfold,
 And all your sacred fellowship restore ;
When, freed from earth, unlimited its powers,
 Mind shall with mind direct communion hold
 And kindred spirits meet to part no more.”

In the case of his son, William Stanley Roscoe (1782—1843), the poetic impulse is obviously stronger though its results are perhaps chiefly interesting as revealing the same delicate qualities of power to which his son was to give a more vigorous distinction. The following address to Spring, however, is, I think, valuable for its own sake, as an exceedingly satisfactory example of the unrhymed lyric.

TO SPRING.

ON THE BANKS OF THE CAM.

“O thou that from the green vales of the west
Com'st in thy tender robes with bashful feet,
And to the gathering clouds
Lifest thy soft blue eye :

I woo thee, Spring, tho' thy dishevell'd hair
In misty ringlets sweep thy snowy breast ;
And thy young lips deplore
Stern Boreas' ruthless rage.

While morn is steep'd in dews, and the dark shower
Drops from the green boughs of the budding trees ;
And the thrush tunes his song
Warbling with unripe throat ;

Thro' the deep wood where spreads the sylvan oak
I follow thee, and see thy hands unfold
The love-sick primrose pale,
And moist-eyed violet.

While in the central grove at thy soft voice
The Dryads start forth from their wintry cells,
And from their oozy waves
The Naiads lift their heads,

In sedgy bonnets trimm'd with rushy leaves,
And water blossoms from the forest stream,
To pay their vows to thee,
Their thrice adored queen !

The stripling shepherd wandering through the wood,
Startles the linnet from her downy nest,
Or wreathes his crook with flowers,
The sweetest of the fields.

From the grey branches of the ivied ash
The stock-dove pours her vernal elegy ;
While further down the vale
Echoes the cuckoo's note.

Beneath this trellis'd arbour's antique roof,
Where the wild laurel rustles in the breeze,
By Cam's slow murmuring stream
I waste the livelong day ;

And bid thee, Spring, rule fair the infant year,
Till my lov'd maid in russet stole approach :
O yield her to my arms,
Her red lips breathing love.

So shall the sweet May drink thy falling tears,
And on thy blue eyes pour a beam of joy ;
And float thy azure locks
Upon the western wind.

So shall the nightingale rejoice thy woods,
And Hesper early light his dewy star,
And oft at eventide,
Beneath the rising moon,

May lovers' whispers soothe thy listening ear,
And as they steal the soft impassion'd kiss,
Confess thy genial reign,
O love-inspiring Spring."

There is in this just the same graceful compromise maintained between tradition on the one hand, and the poet's individuality on the other, which is for me the most distinguishing charm of his son Caldwell Roscoe's verse. In that respect the latter is, apparently, a faithful reflex of himself, for, according to the sympathetic delineation with which his brother-in-law, Mr. Hutton, prefaces the posthumous collection of his remains,¹ he would appear to have belonged to that rare type of man, a type to which one turns with an increasing sense of refreshment and repose after so many generations of aggressive hot-heads, in which the really valuable characteristics of the conservative and the progressive attitudes are alike embodied. He had pre-eminently the judicial faculty. Speaking of the days when they were fellow-students at University College, London, Mr. Hutton remarks, "I never knew a young face so distinctly marked with the expression of an independent *judgment* habitually exercised." No quality could be more precious, though it is so usually lacking, in the case of a poet of a real but frugal inspiration, for, without its guidance, he is little likely to make the best of his powers, apt to expend them in vain epical endeavours when a truer economy, by concentrating them on some less ambitious essay, had directed them to a fruitful end. Though it may be questioned whether Caldwell Roscoe's ambition of dramatic writing, was not a lapse of that judgment, the body

1 "Poems and Essays, by the late William Caldwell Roscoe, edited with a prefatory memoir by his brother-in-law, Richard Holt Hutton. In two volumes. London: Chapman & Hall. 1860."

of his verse is singularly marked by a respect for the limitations of his muse; their artistic appeal is at least authentic, and the wild rhetoric of weakness is a sound unknown in his tranquil garden.

The tenor of his life seems also to have kept pace with his disposition, and to have been of an evenness, exceptional indeed for a pursuit whose annals are proverbially "short and simple." As is the case with so many more literary men, his birth and death furnish the two important dates in his history. He was born in Liverpool on the 20th September, 1823, being W. S. Roscoe's eldest son. His mother was the eldest daughter of James Caldwell, Esq., of Linley Wood in Staffordshire. He was never at a public school, but attended a private one at Liverpool, which, in due time, he left to continue his studies at University College, London, where he took his degree in 1843. The law being chosen as his profession, he entered at the Middle Temple and was called to the bar in 1850. But after two years' practice, he was obliged to relinquish all hopes in that direction, for his constitution, always delicate, was further weakened by repeated attacks of asthma, which made the necessary strain of legal life a dangerous one for him. From that time, with occasional attendances on circuit, his days were devoted mainly to literary pursuits. It was during one of those occasional attendances, at Winchester, that the typhoid fever, which was to prove fatal, came upon him, and though much hope was entertained of his recovery, he died on 30th July, 1859, at the early age of 36.

His writings, as collected by Mr. Hutton, consist of various lyrics, two dramas,—*"Eliduke, Count of*

Yoeloc" (founded on that Lai of Marie of France familiar to the present generation through O'Shaughnessy), and "Violenzia,— and a volume of essays mainly in literary criticism. These latter I have not to consider here, though I can heartily endorse Mr. Hutton's high estimate of them. And with regard to his plays, the latter alone is of importance, though that is distinctly so. Whether it will ever win that recognition for which Mr. Hutton hazards the hope is, I fear, doubtful, not so much in reference to its power, but because of the small and ever-decreasing interest in the purely literary drama. It is nevertheless, dramatic in the most real sense, and though it abounds in lines of beauty and strength, it is not merely in those that it has its value. The characterisation of Ethel, the young warrior whose spiritual evolution is the tragic motive of the play, is one of extreme subtlety, to exhibit which dramatically needed, one cannot but feel, no small inborn dramatic sense. The contrast of the strong treatment of him and the shadowy handling of the other figures in the play, however, suggests that Caldwell Roscoe's powers in this kind were more adapted to the presentation of single dramatic figures—"monodrama," as Lord Tennyson has named it, or the "dramatic lyrie," to make use of Browning's phrase. But, whatever value may in course of time attach to "Violenzia," there can be little doubt that it is for his sonnets and other lyrics that Caldwell Roscoe is at present remembered — his sonnets especially. For his genius was one naturally fitted for evoking the gentler powers of the sonnet, as distinct from the great use of it by which the "the thing" becomes "a trumpet." That he did not, in writing them, always

adhere to strict forms is not likely to trouble serious lovers of poetry; like Wordsworth, and perhaps every one who has written them, his best are irregular, that commencing "Like a Musician," and that to his mother.

These seem to me his two incomparable poems, and worthy to stand in any company of the great. The tenderness of the last is beyond expression. In his verse generally, one always feels organic growth immediately, the presence of that individual life which poetry as distinguished from mere verse-building ever possesses, however delicate and difficult to determine its peculiar qualities may be. Though these in the case of Caldwell Roscoe are certainly not showy, hardly even rich, they are at once recognisable, and it would be a great mistake to suppose his verses but the elegant recreations of a cultured ease.

There is that freshness of phrase in every line which only comes of a genuine imaginative impulse, and each note is struck with the sure touch of art. There is brain in them. He is most happy in delicate observation of nature, especially in her less defined aspects, the more volatile effects of Spring and Autumn. All through he loves to choose the quieter side of life, and when he touches on the more vivid, his verse always comes as "emotion remembered in tranquillity." Four lines of his own will describe his muse.

"Feeling, not passionate, but smoothly centred
In thy breast;
Not an angel hither ventured,
But a maiden heaven addressed."

Delicate imagination, a maidenly freshness, a

gentle music, and a graceful finish—these Caldwell Roscoe can give us ; but for “fine frenzies ” of any description we must seek elsewhere. His poetry is no “lusty flower in June’s caress,” it is rather an anemone, shy and fragile, which one forgets, maybe, when “the high midsummer pomps come on,” but which it seems good to meet in the woods in spring.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

POEMS.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE.

I.—TO THE PLANET VENUS.

SHINING ON A WREATH OF FLOWERS HUNG OVER A LADY'S
NAME CARVED ON A BEECH TREE.

AGAIN i' th' year's slow flight
I stand beneath this tree,
Where once I carved, apart from common sight,
With reverent handicraft thy name, O Emilie,
And now renew the rite.

For since she may not hear,
Nor I lay bare my passion,
Or breathe one love-word in her listening ear,
I'll carve my love on trees, in ancient lovers' fashion,
And woo some favouring sphere.

Lo, golden Apdrodite
Appears to pay her duty ;
See where she rises wrapped in robes of light,
And, like some crimson spot dyeing the cheek of beauty,
Flushes the face of night !

O amorous child of Even,
The sky is all too cold ;
Turn earthward, Queen, thy burning eye from heaven :
Quit the pale crowd of stars ;—no love-tales there
are told,
Or changing love-signs given.

But I can breathe a tale
More passionately true
Than ever flashed a maiden's cheek with pale ;
O Planet Queen, delay thy course across the blue ;—
O, furl thy flickering sail !

She hears and gives a sign,
 Pouring in golden rain,
 Mysterious glory on my flowery shrine ;
 The enwreathed blossoms bent lift their blue
 heads again
 Tasting her breath divine.
 So shall my love, though now
 Signless and dull it lies,
 Fearing to shade with care that ivory brow,
 Read once again love-tokens in her responsive eyes,
 And breathe no common vow.

II.—OPPORTUNITY.

OPPORTUNITY, thou gull o' the world !
 That, being present, winnest but disdain,
 So small thou seem'st, but once behind us whirled,
 A grim phantasma, shadowest all the plain.
 Thou Parthian ! that shoot'st thine arrows back,
 Meeting our front with terror-feigning doles ;
 But often, turning on thy flying track,
 With memory-winged shafts dost wound our souls.
 Thou air ! which breathing we do scarce perceive,
 And think it little to enjoy the light ;
 But when the unvalued sun hath taken leave,
 Darkly thou showest in the expanse of night.
 Thou all men's torment, no man's comforter,—
 Lost Opportunity ! that shut'st the door
 On all unworked intentions, and dost stir
 Their fretting ghosts to plague our heart's deep core.
 Thou sword of sharp Remorse, and sting of Time !
 Passionate empoyer of mortal tears !
 Thou blaster of fresh Hope's recurring prime !
 Crutch of despair, and sustenance of fears !

But oh, to those that have the wit to use thee,
Thou glorious angel, clasped with golden wings,
Whereon he climbing that did rightly choose thee
Sees wondrous sights of unexpected things.

Thou instrument of never-dying fame
To those that snatch thy often-offered hilt ;
To those that on the door can read thy name,
Thou residence of glory ready-built.

Used Opportunity ! thou torch of Act,
And planted ladder to a high desire ;
Thou one thing needful, making nothing lacked ;
Thou spark unto a laid, unlighted fire.

Thou double-faced god and double-souled !
They that look on thy front find thee most true ;
But most remorseless, pitiless, and cold,
Who on thy backward visage bend their view.

III.—THE YEAR OF LOVE.

1857.

TO MY WIFE.

ASK me not, sweet, when I first loved thee,
Nor bid me carry back
Love's meditative memory
Down through a narrowing track.

Remember how, in the sweet spring-time's
First faint prophetic hours,
The golden-headed aconite
Began the time of flowers.

Then seemed it to our happy hearts,
As we stood hand in hand,
As if the promise were fulfilled,
And summer in the land.

Slowly the sap rose in the tree,
 Slowly the airs blew mild ;
Softly the seasons grew, as grows
 The sweetness of thy child.

And when the March-wind sowed the banks
 With early violets,
Or April hung the larchen trees
 In green and crimson nets ;

Or, with white hawthorn-buds in hand,
 Through yellowing oaken woods,
The young light-footed May came down,—
 We knew no changing moods.

We taxed not by comparisons
 The season's growing prime ;
But stood each present day and said,
 " This is the happy time."

Now in the royal day of roses,
 Our love being in its June,
Stand so, nor ask what note began
 This full harmonious tune.

I know thy love hath broadened, yet
 I know when it began
It seemed the fulness of the grace
 That could be granted man.

So deem of mine, nor with spring thoughts
 The fuller June-tide cummer ;
My love grew like the year, and grows
 Up through an endless summer.

IV.—IF IT DIE IT BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT.

THE Nectarine before its fall
Glow through green foliage on the wall,
Crimsoned with sunshine, and made fair
By summer raindrops and soft air.
Soon bitter wind and changing skies
Wither its bloom, it droops and dies ;
The hidden worms make it their prey,
Or yellow wasps eat it away.
This is its outward vestiture,
Deep in the centre less secure ;
The living promise of the seed,—
So hides the soul in mortal weed.
And first the northwind strips away
Green sheltering fancies' rustling play,
And icy Winter lays his hand
On loved associates,—till it stand
Alone : thus richest souls are rent,
Down from their joy and dear content,
And grief and anguish eat away
The freshness of their early day.
Take, then, this seed, laid bare with pain,
Softened with sufferings' bitter rain,
And lay it in the abhorred earth
Of isolation all this worth.
Throw on a spadeful of despair ;
Shut out the hopeful healing air ;
In cold and darkness bury deep,
And bid the prisoner watch and weep.
Then, even then, mysterious love
Within the prison's walls shall move ;
A new sensation, new desires,
Shall stir the soul with secret fires.

Sweet undiscovered hid relations ;
Not faint surmises,—revelations,
Shall swell the soul beneath the sod
And it shall feel the living God.

Deep down in grief it strikes its roots,
Swift up to heaven its head it shoots,
Serenely spreads its boughs abroad
And fronts the chilly blast unawed.

O happy soul, thus sorely tried !
Happy, thus strangely dignified !
Come joy or grief, thou canst but see
A father leaning over thee.

V.—FOR EVER.

THRICE with her lips she touched my lips,
Thrice with her hand my hand,
And three times thrice looked towards the sea,
But never to the land :
Then, "Sweet," she said, "no more delay,
For Heaven forbids a longer stay."

I, with my passion in my heart,
Could find no words to waste ;
But striving often to depart,
I strained her to my breast :
Her wet tears washed my weary cheek ;
I could have died but could not speak.

The anchor swings, the sheet flies loose
And, bending to the breeze,
The tall ship, never to return,
Flies through the foaming seas :
Cheerily ho ! the sailors cry ;—
My sweet love lessening in my eye.

O Love, turn towards the land thy sight !
No more peruse the sea ;
Our God, who severs thus our hearts,
Shall surely care for thee :
For me let waste-wide ocean swing,
I too lie safe beneath his wing.

VI.—A BLIND GIRL'S QUESTIONINGS.

(FRAGMENT.)

SOFT Beauty, clothed in music,
Comes whispering through the woods ;
I hear her lift the branches,
And brush the rustling buds.
Onward I hear her stealing
With low aerial pace,
Till with a mouth of fragrance
She kisses all my face.

O you endowed with vision,
Who talk of shapes and light,
Tell me what other aspect
Belongs to my delight !
In solemn silent night-time
Between the hours of sleep,
What is the sacred Darkness
In which I wake and weep ?

In which no sound familiar
Accosts my straining ear,
But low continuous murmurs
Of emptiness and fear ?
Do you perceive her walking
About the voiceless ground,
As you detect my presence
Although I make no sound ?

SONNETS.

WILLIAM CALDWELL ROSCOE.

I.—LIKE A MUSICIAN.

LIKE a musician that with flying finger
Startles the voice of some new instrument,
And, though he know that in one string are blent
All its extremes of sound, yet still doth linger
Among the lighter threads, fearing to start
The deep soul of that one melodious wire,
Lest it, unanswering, dash his high desire,
And spoil the hopes of his expectant heart ;—
Thus with my mistress oft conversing, I
Stir every lighter theme with careless voice,
Gathering sweet music and celestial joys
From the harmonious soul o'er which I fly ;
Yet o'er the one deep master-chord I hover,
And dare not stoop, fearing to tell—I love her.

II.—LAUDATRIX TEMPORIS ACTI.

WHY should my love in idle phantasy
Flatter the records of her childish hours,
And deem her joy gone by ? Oh, read in me
Love's heart, and entertain his glorious powers ;
Taste Love's high pleasures, and you'll cast in scorn
All fond regrets for former joys away :
Lover's promises are like the hand of Morn,
Crimsoning the East to antedate the day ;
For by so much as is his morning glance
Outrivalled by his full meridian eye,
So much are Love's joys in Love's hopes' advance ;
Yet herein true Love dims the sun on high,—
When once he hath attained his highest bent,
He owns no evening and no occident.

III.—TO MY MOTHER.

AS winter, in some mild autumnal days,
Breathes such an air as youngest spring dis-
closes,

So age in thee renews an infant's grace,
And clothes thy cheek in soft November roses.
Time hath made friends with Beauty in thy face,
And, since the wheeling Fates must be obeyed,
White rime upon thy gracious head he lays,
But whispers gently not to be afraid ;
And tenderly, like one that leads the blind,
He soothes thy lingering footsteps to the gate,
While that great Angel, who there keeps his state,
Smiles to behold with what slow feet he moves.
Move slower, gentlier yet, O Time ! or find
A way to fix her here, bound by our filial loves.

IV.—MY FATHER'S DEATH.

OH, how have men, fooled by this mortal state,
Mistook the image of mysterious Death,
God's messenger, and with injurious breath
Maligned the Porter of the Eternal gate,
Who is indeed all fair, and, early or late,
Herald of Heaven to every man whose faith
Binds him to God, careless of what man saith.
Angel his form when he on *thee* did wait,
Clad like thy soul in white, and, with a smile
That cast its sweet reflection on thy face,
He touched thy marble brow ; loosening the while
With outstretched hand the golden door's embrace,
He ushered thee to the immortal throng,
Who tuned thy welcome home in clear harmonious
song.

V.—DAYBREAK IN FEBRUARY.

OVER the ground white snow, and in the air
Silence. The stars, like lamps soon to expire,
Gleam tremblingly ; serene and heavenly fair,
The eastern hanging crescent climbeth higher.
See, purple on the azure softly steals
And Morning, faintly touched with quivering fire,
Leans on the frosty summits of the hills,
Like a young girl over her hoary sire.
Oh, such a dawning over me has come,
The daybreak of thy purity and love ;—
The sadness of the never satiate tomb
Thy countenance hath power to remove,
And from the sepulchre of Hope, thy palm
Can roll the stone, and raise her bright and calm.

*VI.—THE BUBBLE OF THE SILVER-
SPRINGING WAVES.*

(Printed at the end of " Volenzia.")

THE bubble of the silver-springing waves,
Castalian music, and that flattering sound,
Low rustling of the loved Apollian leaves,
With which my youthful hair was to be crowned,
Grow dimmer in my ears ; white Beauty grieves
Over her votary, less frequent found,
And, not untouched by storms, my life-boat heaves
Through the splashed ocean-waters, outward bound.
And as the leaning mariner, his hand
Clasped on his ear, strives trembling to reclaim
Some love lost echo from the fleeting strand,
So lean I back to the poetic land ;
And in my heart a sound, a voice, a name
Hangs, as above the lamp hangs the expiring flame.

Sydney Dobell.

1824—1874.

SYDNEY DOBELL was born at Cranbrook, in Kent, April 5th, 1824. His father, who shortly afterwards removed to Cheltenham, where he carried on the business of a wine-merchant, belonged to a very small, and very peculiar, but by no means unintelligent or fanatical sect; and the child's remarkable precocity naturally suggested the thought that he might be elected for some special Providential purpose. The combined feeling of isolation and superiority thus generated did much to mould the boy's character, and contributed alike to the strength and weakness of his poetry. His education was private, and the want of all opportunity of measuring himself with others produced a false estimate of his own powers, which misguided him in their application when he came to write his principal work. No such criticism, however, is applicable to "The Roman," a dramatic poem inspired by his passionate zeal for Italian freedom, and composed in 1848 and 1849. This is not merely a vigorous, but a thoroughly sane performance, but the orator is more evident than the poet. It was published in 1850, about which time he was enabled to give up the business to which he had hitherto attended most conscientiously for his father's sake, and to devote himself to literature. He lived for some years chiefly in Edinburgh,

attracted by intellectual sympathies, and alternately nursing and being nursed by the amiable but invalid wife with whom he had contracted a precocious marriage in 1844. His time was chiefly given to the composition of "*Balder*," in whose hero, who bears a singular resemblance to Ibsen's "*Brand*," he intended to concentrate and personify the spiritual maladies of his time, eventually bringing him from doubt to faith. The first (and last) part appeared in 1853. It would be no exaggeration to affirm that it contains beauties beyond the reach of any contemporary poet : but the plan is so preposterous, and the general effect so chaotic, that the character "*arena sine calce*" would be fatally applicable were not the sand so often dust of diamond. What the second and third parts would have been like is difficult to conjecture, though we know that the second part was to have been eked out by the inclusion of a drama to have been entitled "*The Cardinal*." Dobell probably discovered that he was on a wrong track, for he never attempted to continue the poem, and the self-confessed failure may have co-operated with aggravated ill-health in producing the paralysis of intellectual activity which befell his later years. He had, however, previously produced much splendid, and much morbid, or merely manufactured poetry in his "*England in Time of War*" (1856). He resumed business for a short time with success ; but the last twelve years of his life were a hopeless struggle with sickness, necessitating constant change of residence, and almost precluding literary effort. He died on August 22nd, 1874. His character as a man, far from reproducing the inequalities of his poetry, was one of uniform elevation :

he was chivalrous, transparently candid, lofty in all his aims, and capable of the most disinterested and self-sacrificing kindness.

Dobell has perfectly described himself in his quaint comparison of youthful genius to a sucking animal born blind—now drawing rich store of milk from the teat ; now, as it loses its grasp, filling itself with the east wind. His really poetical works (the “Roman” is merely fine rhetoric) are a succession of these contrasts,—splendid diction alternating with dull verbiage, true sublimity with outrageous extravagance or mere inanity. To Dobell it was all one. He was utterly incapable of discriminating between his good work and his bad. He depreciated his own “Keith of Ravelston,” a ballad unsurpassed in our literature for its weird suggestiveness, and in his later productions, fortunately few and far between, he exaggerated the obscurity and pretentiousness of the worst passages of “Balder.” In his “England in time of War,” more provokingly because more inexcusably unequal than “Balder,” he never seems to know when he is writing from the heart and when he is condescending to sentimental and sonorous claptrap. He saw no reason why he should not be the Shakespeare or the Dante of his age, and had no glimmering of the mental angularities and the external disadvantages which made such a pretence preposterous. In a word, scarcely any poet equally inspired has been equally insane. The redeeming feature in the man and the poet is magnanimity. By a native instinct he seeks the highest things. He works on a large scale : indeed, it may be almost said that the greater his theme the better he succeeds with it. The wailings of his sick lady are

insufferable; but give him Mont Blanc to describe and he is perfectly at home. Alone among our modern poets, he finds the sublime a congenial element. Browning and Rossetti burst into it unawares now and then and flash across it like lightning. Dobell enters into it, and remains in it undisturbed for a season. The vision of War in "Balder," the magnificent picture of the night surprise and the morning battle in "A Summer Evening's Dream," are sublime from the first line to the last. This alone lifts Dobell far above the mass of modern poets, while his frequent weighty sentences, delicate descriptive vignettes, and tender subtleties of thought, especially on women, make us deeply deplore the infirmity which made him so strangely incoherent and inconsecutive that the good and the bad sister of the fairy tale seemed to be combined in him, and the toad and the diamond to drop alternately from his mouth. Never was any poet less able or inclined to follow the example set, as he himself tells us in magnificent verse, by

"The great Florentine, who wove his web
And thrust it into hell, and drew it forth
Immortal, having burned all that could burn,
And leaving only what shall still be found
Untouched, nor with the smell of fire upon it,
Under the final ashes of the world."

RICHARD GARNETT.

BALDER.

1853.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

I.—IVAR.

SCENE VII.—*The Study.* BALDER *writing.*

Balder (reads). I stood and did not dream.
Before me was the great plain, and behind
The long dark mountains over which the sun
Held noon; and as I stood the earth 'till now
All summer trembled, and beyond the ridge
A pulsing murmur as of coming seas
On echoing shores from out a further void,
Grew in the far dim distance, as once more
Old ocean made invasion, and advanced
With all his waves. And as a dreamer hears
What sounding on her fleeing track pursues
The frantic soul that in the panic dies,
In louder progress, strepitous, so came
The great approach. Whereat the agued earth
With deadly fear did shiver to her core.
And the sound rose, and her great dread became
Convulsion, and the rampant uproar beat
Wilder alarum on the battered ear,
Swift waxing to the tumult of a host
Charging to battle all on serried steeds
That stepped as one. I strained to the event
With eye-balled sight as to a cry i' the dark,
And all the unseen pursuit more near enraged,
—The panting terror and the throbbing chase,—
Wilder as if the beating heart o' the world
In palpitation mad and moribund
Huge in its quaking tenement did shake
Th' enribbed rocks. And—as me, utterless,
Strong tumult choked, and sick expectance pale,

And horror of the end—a louder blast
Rush'd o'er, and sudden at a thunder peal,
As tho' the loaded sound did with a roar
Discharge its cause, while the great herd that grazed
The summits parted like a scattered flock
Beneath a lion, somewhat leaped the hills,
The awful hills, and on the scattered plain
Came like the crash of doom ! Riderless he
Who can bestride him ? Tho' his reeking flanks
Sonorous clang with loud caparison
Of sounding war. A moment, and he stands
Heightened with pride, dilate at haughty gaze,
His swelling frame to half the horizon round
Breathing defiance ; fierce his levelled head
Equals the clouds ; his eye is as a hot
And bloody star ; his nostrils as the red
Round throat of fiery ordnance, and his snort
Ten thousand clarions. Such a steed, so wild,
Left in some ancient battle of the gods
Great Mars unhorsed.

And now as one who sees
His foe beyond the river, with a plunge
Divides the waters, he with sudden spring
From the recoiling fields that reeled and broke,
Breasted the big spent clouds that, faint with flight,
Each upon each lay cumulous, and thro'
That sundered sea, tremendous, a mile hence,
Swift as a bolt and heavy as a hill,
Shocked the rent plain, and in a wild rebound,
Leaped in mere strength a thousand fathoms high,
Lashing new winds, and, wanton in descent,
Spurning far heaven with upslung vehemence
Of impious heels ; and gnashing rooted oaks,
Wilful did fling them into either sky

Like loathed grass. Then sudden in career
He stretched across the flats. His mighty limbs
Resulting in the plunge from rest to speed
Caverned whereon he stood, and left his place
Mixed in tumultuous ruin. As he went
His hot hoofs thundering filled the fatal air
Recalcitrant, and scattered rocks and stones,
Crushed hall and hamlet, trampled tower and town,
Aye peaceful earth, and sods that nursed the lamb,
Red with the trodden flocks, in hurtled death
Swept the disastrous land. As when some mine,
Dark filled with sulphurous slaughter, at a nod
Belching its storm, o'erwhelms in sudden wreck
The startled siege. O'er all the wide expanse
The wondrous swift concussion of his course
Sped desolation : far and near I saw
How dust-clouds, hovering like a pestilence,
Marked fallen cities, that on either hand
Confessed the unseen commotion where he passed.
And round the extremest verge dim rocks were rent,
And him in distance lost a sound betrayed,
The loud world groaned within as the great cry
Of crushed mankind proclaimed the track of "War."

II.—SAILORS' SONG.

(FROM SCENE IX.)

"How many?" said our good Captain,
"Twenty sail and more."
We were homeward bound,
Scudding in a gale with our jib towards the Nore.
Right athwart our tack,
The foe came thick and black,
Like Hell-birds and foul weather—you might count
them by the score.

The Betsy Jane did slack
To see the game in view.
They knew the Union Jack,
And the tyrant's flag we knew !
Our Captain shouted "clear the decks !" and the
Bo'sun's whistle blew.

Then our gallant Captain,
With his hand he seized the wheel,
And pointed with his stump to the middle of the foc.
"Hurrah, lads, in we go !"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

"There are twenty sail," sang he,
"But little Betsy Jane bobs to nothing on the sea !"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

"See yon ugly craft
With the pennon at her main !
Hurrah, my merry boys,
There goes the Betsy Jane !"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

The foe, he beats to quarters, and the Russian bugles
sound ;
And the little Betsy Jane she leaps upon the sca.
"Port and starboard !" cried our Captain ;
"Pay it in, my hearts !" sang he,
"We're old England's sons,
And we'll fight for her to-day !"
(You should hear the British cheer,
Fore and aft.)

“Fire away;”
In she runs,
And her guns.
Thunder round.

III.—BALDER AND AMY.

(FROM SCENE XXIV.)

Amy. Shall we walk, husband, to yon shady tree
Above the little stream? [*They walk.*

Balder. Alas! that one
Should use the days of summer but to live,
And breathe but as the needful element
The strange superfluous glory of the air!
Nor rather stand apart in awe beside
The untouched Time, and saying o'er and o'er
In love and wonder, “these are summer days.”

Amy. Let us sit here. [*They sit.*

Balder. Under this ash, last spring,
I saw a sight more sweet than ever clown
Came on a-sudden in a fairy ring
By summer moon. A growth of primroses,
Thick as the stars by night, and like the stars
In constellations and in orbits due,
Shone round the central tree. I could believe
Queen Flora, on a royal progress tired,
Halted beneath it, and her flowery court
Pitched their fair tents about her, or, well-pleased,
Sole or by twins, in fragrant converse, lay
Upon the enchanted ground. Thou hadst a song,
A country song, a chanted calendar,
Fit to be timbrelled to the tambourine——

[*AMY interrupts him.*

Amy (sings).

First came the primrose,
On the bank high,
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower
When the battle rolls below,
So looked she,
And saw the storms go by.

Then came the wind-flower
In the valley left behind,
As a wounded maiden pale
With purple streaks of woe
When the battle has rolled by
Wanders to and fro,
So tottered she,
Dishevelled in the wind.

Then came the daisies,
On the first of May,
Like a bannered show's advance
While the crowd runs by the way,
With ten thousand flowers about them they came
trooping through the fields.

As a happy people come,
So came they,
As a happy people come,
When the war has rolled away,
With dance and tabor, pipe and drum,
And all make holiday.

Then came the cowslip,
Like a dancer in the fair,
She spread her little mat of green,
And on it danced she.
With a fillet bound about her brow,

A fillet round her happy brow,
A golden fillet round her brow
And rubies in her hair.

No more, no more, for I am tired of singing,
I'll make a garland, as in olden days,
And crown thee as of old.

[*She runs off to neighbouring flowers.*]

Balder.

Thou most pure essence,
Wilt thou exhale i' the sun? Being from me
Tho' but a little way mine eyes do fear
To leave thee, as they fear to leave the light
In a dew-drop. Happy perchance for thee,
If the spell brake and light returned to light !
Yet the strong Fate that mixed us hath wrought well.
I am for thee ; thou mightest have crossed this world
Among our grosser motions as a spirit
Unseen, nor having organs to discourse
The rare ethereal of its too divine
And necessary beauty ; but O soul,
O woman mere and absolute, O Amy !
Upon a sacred moment thou didst come
Into the body of my Love and Power,
And henceforth art a worship, being seen
And known unto the eyes and hearts of men
For ever ; to whom temples shall be built
And nations offer gifts of sighs and tears.
Thou, little one, who sittest twining flowers,
White flowers that lie like dew upon thy breast
Thou fairer blossom, and salutest each
With such new joy and fond discovery
As if thou least of living things couldst spare
A loveliness, and to thee most of all
'Twere wondrous to be fair,—Thou who, too rich
And poor, when thy dear arms are round my neck

Hast no belief in human lot more proud,
Nor knowledge of a place in the wide world
So regal—little knowing what thou art,—
If I could tell thee all, wouldst thou grow pale
And tremble? I know not. Nay if this hour
The green hill and the world below the hill
Fell from thee, and thou shining like a saint
Ineffable in mid heaven were left bare
To the assembled and upturned gaze
Of this great Universe, I could believe
Thou wouldst no more than lift up thy pure eyes
Unconscious, and walk forth among the stars
As in a planted garden. Well for thee,
Dear child, in thine eternal childhood more
Than I who wrestling would join arms with gods!
Do these things haunt thee? Dost thou ever dream
That thro' all human precincts evermore,
Wherever Love hath honour and Beauty fame
Thou shalt be welcome? Dost thou think at all
Of those who in the centuries to come
Shall seek thee? Men who in a golden time,
Noblest, shall rule a nobler race than ours.
These shall have read the shining scroll on high
And known what thoughts they be that God writes down
Upon his starry tablets, and for these,
Full-grown, this Mother Earth round whom to-day
Men stand as children spelling Truths unknown,
Shall close the open book upon her knee,
And tell out of her deep invisible heart
The secrets of her youth! But these shall pause
To hear thee, Amy; bending from their thrones,
Among which thou with simple step and sweet,
Dressed in thy country life, goest in and out
By right, for thou art mine

ENGLAND IN TIME OF WAR.

1856.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

I.—THE MARKET-WIFE'S SONG.

THE butter an' the cheese weel stowit they be,
I sit on the hen-coop the eggs on my knee,
The land kail jigs as we jog owre the rigs,
The gray mare's tail it wags wi' the kail,
The warm simmer sky is blue aboon a',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

I sit on the coop, I look straight before,
But my heart it is awa' the braid ocean owre,
I see the bluidy fiel' where my ain bonny chiel',
My wee bairn o' a', gaed to fight or to fa',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

I see the gran' toun o' the big forrin' loun,
I hear the cannon soun', I see the reek aboon ;
It may be lang John lettin' aff his gun,
It may be the mist—your mither disna wist—
It may be the kirk, it may be the ha',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

An' I ken the Black Sea, ayont the rock o' dool,
Like a muckle blot o' ink in a buik fra' the schule,
An' Jock ! it gars me min' o' your buikies lang syne,
An' mindin' o' it a' the tears begin to fa',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

Then a bull roars fra' the scaur, ilka rock's a bull
agen,
An' I hear the trump o' war, an' the carse is fu' o'
men,

Up an' down the morn I ken the bugle horn,
Ilka birdie sma' is a fleein' cannon ba',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

Guid Heavens! the Russian host! We maun e'en
gie up for lost!

Gin ye gain the battle hae ye countit a' the cost?
Ye may win a gran' name, but wad wee Jock come
hame?

Dinna fecht, dinna fecht! there's room for us a',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

In vain, in vain, in vain! They are marchin' near
and far!

Wi' swords an' wi' slings an' wi' instruments o' war!
Oh, day sae dark an' sair! ilka man seven feet an'
mair!

I bow my head an' say, "Gin the Lord wad smit
them a'!"

An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

Then forth fra' their ban' there steps an armed man,
His tairge at his breast an' his claymore in his han',
His gowd pow glitters fine an' his shadow fa's behin',
I think o' great Goliath as he stan's before them a',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

To meet the Philistine leaps a laddie fra' our line,
Oh, my heart! oh, my heart! 'tis that wee lad o' mine!
I start to my legs—an' down fa' the eggs—
The cocks an' hens a' they cackle an' they ca',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

Oh, Jock, my Hielan' lad,—oh, Jock, my Hielan' lad,
Never till I saw thee that moment was I glad !
Aye sooner sud thou dee before thy mither's e'e
Than a man o' the clan sud hae stept out but thee !
An' sae I cry to God—while the hens cackle a',
An' whiddie, whuddie, whaddie, gang the auld
wheels twa.

II.—A NUPTIAL EVE.

O H, happy, happy maid,
In the year of war and death
She wears no sorrow !
By her face so young and fair,
By the happy wreath
That rules her happy hair,
She might be a bride to-morrow !
She sits and sings within her moonlit bower,
Her moonlit bower in rosy June,
Yet, ah, her bridal breath,
Like fragrance from some sweet night-blowing
flower,
Moves from her moving lips in many a mournful
tune !
She sings no song of love's despair,
She sings no lover lowly laid,
No fond pcculiar grief
Has ever touched or bud or leaf
Of her unblighted spring.
She sings because she needs must sing :
She sings the sorrow of the air
Whereof her voice is made.
That night in Britain howsoc'er
On any chords the fingers strayed,
They gave the notes of care.

A dim sad legend old
Long since in some pale shade
Of some far twilight told,
She knows not when or where,
She sings, with trembling hand on trembling lute-
strings laid :—

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine ;—
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill
And through the silver meads ;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she !

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode thro' the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine !—
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade ;
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine ;—
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

I lay my hand upon the stile,
The stile is lone and cold ;
The burnie that goes babbling by
Says nought that can be told.

Yet, stranger ! here, from year to year,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;—
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Step out three steps where Andrew stood—
Why blanch thy cheeks for fear ?
The ancient stile is not alone,
'Tis not the burn I hear !

She makes her immemorial moan,
She keeps her shadowy kine ;—
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

III.—AN EVENING DREAM.

I'M leaning where you loved to lean in eventides of
old,
The sun has sunk an hour ago behind the treeless
wold,
In this old oriel that we loved how oft I sit forlorn,
Gazing, gazing, up the vale of green and waving corn.
The summer corn is in the ear, thou knowest what
I see
Up the long wide valley, and from seldom tree to tree,

The serried corn, the serried corn, the green and
serried corn,
From the golden morn till night, from the moony
night till morn.
I love it, morning, noon, and night, in sunshine and
in rain,
For being here it seems to say, "The lost come back
again."
And being here as green and fair as those old fields
we knew,
It says, "The lost when they come back, come back
unchanged and true."
But more than at the shout of morn, or in the sleep
of noon,
Smiling with a smiling star, or wan beneath a wasted
moon,
I love it, soldier brother ! at this weird dim hour, for
then
The serried ears are swords and spears, and the fields
are fields of men.
Rank on rank in faultless phalanx stern and still I
can discern,
Phalanx after faultless phalanx in dumb armies still
and stern ;
Army on army, host on host, till the bannered nations
stand,
As the dead may stand for judgment silent on the
o'erpeopled land.
Not a bayonet stirs : down sinks the awful twilight,
dewn and dun,
On an age that waits its leader, on a world that waits
the sun.
Then your dog—I know his voice—cries from out the
courtyard nigh,

And my love too well interprets all that long and
mournful cry ;
In my passion that thou art not, lo ! I see thee as
thou art,
And the pitying fancy brings thee to assuage the
anguished heart.
" Oh my brother ! " and my bosom's throb of welcome
at the word,
Claps a hundred thousand hands, and all my legions
hail thee lord.
And the vast unmotioned myriads, front to front, as
at a breath,
Live and move to martial music, down the devious
dance of death,
Ah, thou smilest, scornful brother, at a maiden's
dream of war !
And thou shakest back thy locks as if—a glow-worm
for thy star—
I dubbed thee with a blade of grass, by earthlight
in a fairy ring,
Knight o' the garter o' Queen Mab, or lord in-waiting-
to her king.
Brother, in thy plumèd pride of tented field and
turreted tower,
Smiling brother, scornful brother, darest thou watch
with me one hour ?
Even now some fate is near, for I shake and know
not why,
And a wider sight is orbing, orbing, on my moistened
eye,
And I feel a thousand flutterings round my soul's
still vacant field,
Like the ravens and the vultures o'er a carnage yet
unkilled.

Hist ! I see the stir of glamour far upon the twilight
wold,
Hist ! I see the vision rising ! List ! and as I speak
behold !
These dull mists are mists of morning, and behind
yon eastern hill,
The hot sun abides my bidding : he shall melt them
when I will.
All the night that now is past, the foe hath laboured
for the day,
Creeping thro' the stealthy dark, like a tiger to his
prey.
Throw this window wider ! Strain thine eyes along
the dusky vale !
Art thou cold with horror ? Has thy bearded cheek
grown pale ?
'Tis the total Russian host, flooding up the solemn
plain,
Secret as a silent sea, mighty as a moving
main !
Oh, my country ! is there none to rouse thee to the
rolling sight ?
Oh thou gallant sentinel who has watched so oft so
well, must thou sleep this only night ?
So hath the shepherd lain on a rock above a
plain,
Nor beheld the flood that swelled from some em-
bowelled mount of woe,
Waveless, foamless, sure and slow,
Silent o'er the vale below,
Till nigher still and nigher comes the seethe of fields
on fire,
And the thrash of falling trees, and the steam of
rivers dry,

And before the burning flood the wild things of the
wood

Skulk and scream, and fight, and fall, and flee, and
fly.

A gun ! and then a gun ! I' the far and early sun
Dost thou see by yonder tree a fleeting redness rise,
As if, one after one, ten poppies red had blown,
And shed in a blinking of the eyes ?

They have started from their rest with a bayonet at
each breast,

Those watchers of the west who shall never watch
again !

'Tis nought to die, but oh, God's pity on the woe
Of dying hearts that know they die in vain !

Beyond yon backward height that meets their dying
sight.

A thousand tents are white, and a slumbering army
lies.

"Brown Bess," the sergeant cries, as he loads her
while he dies,

"Let this devil's deluge reach them, and the good
old cause is lost."

He dies upon the word, but his signal gun is heard,
Yon ambush green is stirred, yon labouring leaves
are tost.

And a sudden sabre waves, and like dead from
opened graves,

A hundred men stand up to meet a host.

Dumb as death, with bated breath,

Calm upstand that fearless band,

And the dear, old native land, like a dream of
sudden sleep,

Passes by each manly eye that is fixed so stern and dry
On the tide of battle rolling up the steep.

They hold their silent ground, I can hear each fatal
 sound
 Upon that summer mound which the morning
 sunshine warms,
The word so brief and shrill that rules them like a
 will,
 The sough of moving limbs, and the clank and ring
 of arms.
“Fire !” and round that green knoll the sudden war-
 clouds roll,
 And from the tyrant’s ranks so fierce an answ’ring
 blast
Of whirling death came back that the green trees
 turned to black,
 And dropped their leaves in winter as it passed.
A moment on each side the surging smoke is wide,
 Between the fields are green, and around the hills
 are loud,
But a shout breaks out, and lo ! they have rushed
 upon the foe,
 As the living lightning leaps from cloud to cloud.
Fire and flash, smoke and crash,
The fogs of battle close o’er friends and foes, and
 they are gone !
Alas, thou bright-eyed boy ! alas, thou mother’s joy !
 With thy long hair so fair, thou didst so bravely
 lead them on !
I faint with pain and fear. Ah, heaven ! what do I
 hear ?
 A trumpet-note so near ?
What are these that race like hunters at a chase ?
 Who are these that run a thousand men as one ?
What are these that crash the trees far in the waving
 rear ?

Fight on, thou young hero ! there's help upon the way !

The light horse are coming, the great guns are coming,

The Highlanders are coming ;—good God, give us the day !

Hurrah for the brave and the leal ! Hurrah for the strong and the true !

Hurrah for the helmets of steel ! Hurrah for the bonnets o' blue !

A run and a cheer, the Highlanders are here ! a gallop, a cheer, the light horse are here !

A rattle and a cheer, the great guns are here !

With a cheer they wheel round and face the foe !

As the troopers wheel about, their long swords are out,

With a trumpet and a shout, in they go !

Like a yawning ocean green, the huge host gulps them in

But hush o'er the rolling of the flood,

Their sabres you may see like lights upon the sea

When the red sun is going down in blood.

Again, again, again ! And the lights are on the wane !

Ah, Christ ! I see them sink, light by light,

As the gleams go one by one when the great sun is down.

And the sea rocks in foam beneath the night.

Aye, the great sun is low, and the waves of battle flow

O'er his honoured head ; but, oh, we mourn not he is down,

For to-morrow he shall rise to fill his country's eyes.

As he sails up the skies of renown !

Ye may yell, but ye shall groan !
Ye shall buy them bone for bone !
Now, tyrant, hold thine own ! blare the trumpet,
 peal the drum !
From yonder hill-side dark, the storm is on you !
 Hark !
 Swift as lightning, loud as thunder, down they
 come !
As on some Scottish shore, with mountains frowning
 o'er,
 The sudden tempests roar from the glen,
And roll the tumbling sea in billows to the lee,
 Came the charge of the gallant Highlandmen !
And as one beholds the sea tho' the wind he cannot
 see,
 But by the waves that flee knows its might,
So I tracked the Highland blast by the sudden tide
 that past
 O'er the wild and rolling vast of the fight.
Yes, glory be to God ! they have stemmed the
 foremost flood !
 I lay me on the sod and breathe again !
In the precious moments won, the bugle call has
 gone
 To the tents where it never rang in vain,
And lo ! the landscape wide is red from side to
 side,
 And all the might of England loads the plain !
Like a hot and bloody dawn, across the horizon
 drawn,
 While the host of darkness holds the misty vale,
As glowing and as grand our bannered legions
 stand,
 And England's flag unfolds upon the gale !

At that great sign unfurled, as morn moves o'er the
world

When God lifts His standard of light,
With a tumult and a voice, and a rushing mighty
noise,

Our long line moves forward to the fight,
Clarion and clarion defying,
Sounding, resounding, replying,
Trumpets braying, pipers playing, chargers neighing,
Near and far

The to and fro storm of the never-done hurraing,
Thro' the bright weather banner and feather rising
and falling, bugle and fife

Calling, recalling—for death or for life—

Our host moved on to the war,
While England, England, England, England, Eng-
land !

Was blown from line to line near and far,
And like the morning sea, our bayonets you might
see,

Come beaming, gleaming, streaming,
Streaming, gleaming, beaming,
Beaming, streaming, gleaming, to the war.

Clarion and clarion defying,
Sounding, resounding, replying,
Trumpets braying, pipers playing, chargers neighing,
Near and far

The to and fro storm of the never-done hurraing,
Thro' the bright weather, banner and feather rising
and falling, bugle and fife

Calling, recalling—for death or for life—

Our long line moved forward to the war.

IV.—TOMMY'S DEAD.

YOU may give over plough, boys,
You may take the gear to the stead ;
All the sweat o' your brow, boys,
Will never get beer and bread.
The seed's waste, I know, boys ;
There's not a blade will grow, boys ;
'Tis cropped out, I trow, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

Send the colt to the fair, boys—
He's going blind, as I said,
My old eyes can't bear, boys,
To see him in the shed ;
The cow's dry and spare, boys,
She's neither here nor there, boys,
I doubt she's badly bred ;
Stop the mill to-morn, boys,
There'll be no more corn, boys,
Neither white nor red ;
There's no sign of grass, boys,
You may sell the goat and the ass, boys,
The land's not what it was, boys,
And the beasts must be fed ;
You may turn Peg away, boys,
You may pay off old Ned,
We've had a dull day, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

Move my chair on the floor, boys,
Let me turn my head :
She's standing there in the door, boys,
Your sister Winifred !
Take her away from me, boys,

Your sister Winifred !
Move me round in my place, boys,
Let me turn my head,
Take her away from me, boys,
As she lay on her death-bed—
The bones of her thin face, boys,
As she lay on her death-bed !
I don't know how it be, boys,
When all's done and said,
But I see her looking at me, boys,
Wherever I turn my head ;
Out of the big oak-tree, boys,
Out of the garden-bed,
And the lily as pale as she, boys,
And the rose that used to be red.

There's something not right, boys,
But I think it's not in my head ;
I've kept my precious sight, boys,
The Lord be hallowèd.
Outside and in,
The ground is cold to my tread,
The hills are wizen and thin,
The sky is shrivelled and shred ;
The hedges down by the loan
I can count them bone by bone,
The leaves are open and spread.
But I see the teeth of the land,
And hands like a dead man's hand,
And the eyes of a dead man's head.
There's nothing but cinders and sand,
The rat and the mouse have fled,

And the summer's empty and cold ;
Over valley and wold,
Wherever I turn my head,
There's a mildew and a mould ;
The sun's going out overhead,
And I'm very old,
And Tommy's dead.

What am I staying for, boys ?
You're all born and bred—
'Tis fifty years and more, boys,
Since wife and I were wed ;
And she's gone before, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

She was always sweet, boys,
Upon his curly head,
She knew she'd never see't, boys,
And she stole off to bed ;
I've been sitting up alone, boys,
For he'd come home, he said,
But it's time I was gone, boys,
For Tommy's dead.

Put the shutters up, boys,
Bring out the beer and bread,
Make haste and sup, boys,
For my eyes are heavy as lead ;
There's something wrong i' the cup, boys,
There's something ill wi' the bread ;
I don't care to sup, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

I'm not right, I doubt, boys,
I've such a sleepy head ;
I shall never more be stout, boys,
You may carry me to bed.
What are you about, boys ?
The prayers are all said,
The fire's raked out, boys,
And Tommy's dead

The stairs are too steep, boys,
You may carry me to the head,
The night's dark and deep, boys,
Your mother's long in bed ;
'Tis time to go to sleep, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

I'm not used to kiss, boys ;
You may shake my hand instead.
All things go amiss, boys,
You may lay me where she is, boys,
And I'll rest my old head ;
'Tis a poor world, this, boys,
And Tommy's dead.

SONNETS.

SYDNEY DOBELL.

I.—THE ARMY SURGEON.

OVER that breathing waste of friends and foes,
The wounded and the dying, hour by hour,—
In will a thousand, yet but one in power,—
He labours thro' the red and groaning day.
The fearful moorland where the myriads lay
Moved as a moving field of mangled worms.
And as a raw brood, orphaned in the storms,
Thrust up their heads if the wind bend a spray
Above them, but when the bare branch performs
No sweet parental office, sink away
With hopeless chirp of woe, so as he goes
Around his feet in clamorous agony
They rise and fall; and all the seething plain
Bubbles a cauldron vast of many-coloured pain.

II.—THE COMMON GRAVE.

LAST night beneath the foreign stars I stood
And saw the thoughts of those at home go by
To the great grave upon the hill of blood.
Upon the darkness they went visibly,
Each in the vesture of its own distress.
Among them there came One, frail as a sigh,
And like a creature of the wilderness
Dug with her bleeding hands. She neither cried
Nor wept: nor did she see the many stark
And dead that lay unburied at her side.
All night she toiled, and at that time of dawn,
When Day and Night do change their More or Less,
And Day is More, I saw the melting Dark
Stir to the last, and knew she laboured on.

William Allingham.

1824—1889.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM was born in 1824 in Ballyshannon, a little Donegal town, where his ancestors had lived for generations. Here he grew up, filling his mind with all the quaint legends and fancies that linger still in such odd corners of the world, and with that devotion for the place where he was born, felt by few people so intensely as by the Irish. When he was old enough, a small post in the Customs was found for him, and there seemed every likelihood of his spending an obscure life in

“a little town
Where little folk go up and down.”

In his twenty-sixth year his first volume, “Poems,” was issued, and, four years later, in 1854, the first series of those “Day and Night Songs,” which contain so many of his best lyrics. “The Music Master” and a new series of “Day and Night Songs” followed in 1855. From 1848 it had been his custom to cross over to London every summer. In one of these visits he had met Rossetti, and been introduced by him to Millais and the rest of the pre-Raphaelites. Rossetti and Millais now illustrated “The Music Master” with the fine drawings reprinted in the collected edition of Allingham’s works. It was followed by “Laurence Bloomfield”—an agrarian

epic—and “Fifty Modern Poems,” containing his last Ballyshannon verses, in 1864 and 1865 respectively. During these years he had also published poems in Ballyshannon itself, by means of broadsheets, which had a wide circulation among the peasantry. The Government considered this local popularity of his verse useful to education, and rewarded him with a pension of £60 a year.

He now left Ballyshannon for London, and either because his imagination flagged among the London crowds, or because he had said all that was in him to say, or for some other reason not so easy to trace, he ceased to write any poetry as good as the old, and little poetry of any kind. He busied himself with revising, not always happily, his earlier verses, and republishing them from time to time. In 1874 he was appointed editor of *Fraser*, and printed in its pages his one prose book, “The Rambles of Patricius Walker,” an account of his journeys through English country places. In the same year he married Miss Helen Paterson, the well-known artist. Among his few poetical ventures in these later years were “Ashby Manor,” a play written in alternate prose and verse, limpid and graceful, but quite lacking in true passion and dramatic energy; and “Evil May Day,” a heavy argumentative experiment in philosophic poetry. He had almost quite lost the light touch and flying fancy of his younger days, and but seldom gave any echo of the old beauty in stray lyric or haphazard snatch of rhyme. The last years of his life were spent mainly at Whitby, where he died in 1889, after a somewhat long illness, brought on by a fall when riding.

To feel the entire fascination of his poetry, it is perhaps necessary to have spent one's childhood, like the present writer, in one of those little seaboard Connaught towns. He has expressed that curious devotion of the people for the earth under their feet, a devotion that is not national, but local, a thing at once more narrow and more idyllic. He sang Ballyshannon and not Ireland. Neither his emotions nor his thoughts took any wide sweep over the world of man and nature. He was the poet of little things and little moments, and of that vague melancholy Lord Palmerston considered peculiar to the peasantry of the wild seaboard where he lived. In one of the rare moments of quaint inspiration that came to him in recent years, he wrote—

“ Four ducks on a pond,
A grass-bank beyond,
A blue sky of spring,
White clouds on the wing;
What a little thing
To remember for years—
To remember with tears! ”

and in the words summed up unconsciously his own poetic personality. The charm of his work is everywhere the charm of stray moments and detached scenes that have moved him; the pilot's daughter in her Sunday frock; the wake with the candles round the corpse, and a cloth under the chin; the ruined Abbey of Asaroe, an old man who was of the blood of those who founded it, watching sadly the crumbling walls; girls sewing and singing under a thorn tree; the hauling in of the salmon nets; the sound of a clarionet through the open and ruddy shutter of a forge; the piano from some larger

house, and so on, a rubble of old memories and impressions made beautiful by pensive feeling. Exquisite in short lyrics, this method of his was quite inadequate to keep the interest alive through a long poem. "Laurence Bloomfield," for all its stray felicities, is dull, and "The Music Master" and "The Lady of the Sea" are tame and uninventive. He saw neither the great unities of God or of man, of his own spiritual life or of the life of the nation about him, but looked at all through a kaleidoscope full of charming accidents and momentary occurrences. In greater poets everything has relation to the national life or to profound feeling; nothing is an isolated artistic moment; there is a unity everywhere, everything fulfils a purpose that is not its own; the hailstone is a journeyman of God, and the grass blade carries the universe upon its point. But, then, if Allingham had had this greater virtue, he might have lost that which was peculiar to himself, and we might never have had the "Twilight Voices" or "Mary Donnelly," or that bitter-sweet exile ballad "The Winding Banks of Erne."

W. B. YEATS.

IRISH POEMS AND FLOWER FANCIES.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

I.—THE ABBOT OF INISFÄLEN.

(A KILLARNEY LEGEND.)

I.

THE Abbot of Inisfälen awoke ere dawn of day;
Under the dewy green leaves went he forth to pray.
The lake around his island lay smooth and dark and deep,
And wrapt in a misty stillness the mountains were all
asleep.
Low kneel'd the Abbot Cormac when the dawn was dim
and gray;
The prayers of his holy office he faithfully 'gan say.
Low kneel'd the Abbot Cormac while the dawn was waxing
red;
And for his sins' forgiveness a solemn prayer he said:
Low kneel'd the holy Abbot while the dawn was waxing
clear;
And he prayed with loving-kindness for his convent-brethren
dear.
Low kneel'd that blessed Abbot while the dawn was waxing
bright;
He pray'd a great prayer for Ireland, he pray'd with all his
might.
Low kneel'd that good old Father while the sun began
to dart;
He pray'd a prayer for all men, he pray'd it from his heart.
His blissful soul was in Heaven, tho' a breathing man
was he;
He was out of time's dominion, so far as the living may be.

II.

The Abbot of Inisfälen arose upon his feet;
He heard a small bird singing, and O but it sang sweet!
It sung upon a holly-bush, this little snow-white bird;
A song so full of gladness he never before had heard.

It sung upon a hazel, it sung upon a thorn ;
He had never heard such music since the hour that he was
born.

It sung upon a sycamore, it sung upon a briar ;
To follow the song and harken this Abbot could never
tire.

Till at last he well bethought him ; he might no longer
stay ;

So he bless'd the little white singing-bird, and gladly went
his way.

III.

But, when he came to his Abbey, he found a wondrous
change ;

He saw no friendly faces there, for every face was strange.
The strange men spoke unto him ; and he heard from all
and each

The foreign tongue of the Sassenach, not wholesome Irish
speech.

Then the oldest monk came forward, in Irish tongue spake
he :

‘Thou wearest the holy Augustine’s dress, and who hath
given it to thee ?’

‘I wear the holy Augustine’s dress, and Cormac is my
name,

The Abbot of this good Abbey by the grace of God I am.

I went forth to pray, at the dawn of day ; and when my
prayers were said,

I harken’d awhile to a little bird, that sung above my head.
The monks to him made answer, ‘Two hundred years
have gone o’er,

Since our Abbot Cormac went through the gate, and never
was heard of more.

Matthias now is our Abbot, and twenty have pass’d away.
The stranger is lord of Ireland ; we live in an evil day.’

‘Days will come and go,’ he said, ‘and the world will
pass away,
In Heaven a day is a thousand years, a thousand years
are a day.’

IV.

‘Now give me absolution ; for my time is come,’ said he.
And they gave him absolution, as speedily as might be.
Then, close outside the window, the sweetest song they
heard
That ever yet since the world begun was utter’d by any
bird.
The monks look’d out and saw the bird, its feathers all
white and clean ;
And there in a moment, beside it, another white bird was
seen.
Those two they sang together, waved their white wings,
and fled ;
Flew aloft, and vanish’d ; but the good old man was dead.
They buried his blessed body where lake and greensward
meet ;
A carven cross above his head, a holly-bush at his feet ;
Where spreads the beautiful water to gay or cloudy skies,
And the purple peaks of Killarney from ancient woods arise.

II.—TWILIGHT VOICES.

NOW, at the hour when ignorant mortals
Drowse in the shade of their whirling sphere,
Heaven and Hell from invisible portals
Breathing comfort and ghastly fear,
Voices I hear ;
I hear strange voices, flitting, calling,
Wavering by on the dusky blast,—
“Come, let us go, for the night is falling ;
Come, let us go, for the day is past !”

Troops of joys are they, now departed ?
Wingèd hopes that no longer stay ?
Guardian spirits grown weary-hearted ?
Powers that have linger'd their latest day ?
What do they say ?

What do they sing ? I hear them calling,
Whispering, gathering, flying fast,—
“Come, come, for the night is falling ;
Come, come, for the day is past !”

Sing they to me ?—“Thy taper’s wasted ;
Mortal, thy sands of life run low ;
Thine hours like a flock of birds have hasted ;
Time is ending ;—we go, we go !”

Sing they so ?
Mystical voices, floating, calling ;
Dim farewells—the last, the last ?—
“Come, come away, the night is falling ;
Come, come away, the day is past !”

See, I am ready, Twilight Voices !
Child of the spirit-world am I ;
How should I fear you ? my soul rejoices,
O speak plainer ! O draw nigh !
Fain would I fly !

Tell me your message, ye who are calling
Out of the dimness, vague and vast ?—
Lift me, take me,—the night is falling ;
Quick, let us go,—the day is past !

III.—A DREAM.

I HEARD the dogs howl in the moonlight night ;
I went to the window to see the sight ;
All the Dead that ever I knew
Going one by one and two by two.

On they pass'd, and on they pass'd ;
Townsfellows all, from first to last ;
Born in the moonlight of the lane,
Quench'd in the heavy shadow again.

Schoolmates, marching as when we play'd
At soldiers once—but now more staid ;
Those were the strangest sight to me
Who were drown'd, I knew, in the awful sea.

Straight and handsome folk ; bent and weak, too ;
Some that I loved, and gasp'd to speak to ;
Some but a day in their churchyard bed ;
Some that I had not known were dead.

A long, long crowd—where each seem'd lonely,
Yet of them all there was one, one only,
Raised a head or look'd my way :
She linger'd a moment,—she might not stay.

How long since I saw that fair pale face !
Ah ! Mother dear ! might I only place
My head on thy breast, a moment to rest,
While thy hand on my tearful cheek were prest !

On, on, a moving bridge they made
Across the moon-stream, from shade to shade,
Young and old, women and men ;
Many long-forgot, but remember'd then.

And first there came a bitter laughter ;
A sound of tears the moment after ;
And then a music so lofty and gay,
That every morning, day by day,
I strive to recall it if I may.

IV.—THE FAIRIES.

UP the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !
Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide foam ;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.
High on the hill-top
The old king sits ;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columkill he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses :
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.
They stole little Bridget
For seven years long ;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.

They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.
By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.
Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men ;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together ;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather !

V.—THE LOVER AND BIRDS.

WITHIN a budding grove,
In April's car sang every bird his best,
But not a song to pleasure my unrest,
Or touch the tears unwept of bitter love.
Some spake, methought, with pity, some as if in jest.
To every word
Of every bird
I listen'd and replied as it behove.

Scream'd Chaffinch, "Sweet, sweet, sweet !
Pretty lovey, come and meet me here !"
"Chaffinch," quoth I, "be dumb awhile, in fear
Thy darling prove no better than a cheat,
And never come, or fly when wintry days appear."
Yet from a twig
With voice so big,
The little fowl his utterance did repeat.

Then I, "The man forlorn
Hears Earth send up a foolish noise aloft."
"And what'll *he* do ? What'll *he* do ?" scoff'd
The Blackbird, standing in an ancient thorn,
Then spread his sooty wings and flitted to the croft
With cackling laugh :
Whom I, being half
Enraged, call'd after, giving back his scorn.

Worse mock'd the Thrush, "Die ! die !
Oh, could he do it ? could he do it ? Nay !
Be quick ! be quick ! Here, here, here !" (went his
lay)
"Take heed ! take heed," then, "Why ? why ? why ?
why ? why ?
See-ee now ! see-ee now !" he drawled "Back ! back !
back ! R-r-r-run away !"
O Thrush be still !
Or, at thy will,
Seek some less sad interpreter than I.

"Air, air ! blue air and white !
Whither I flee, whither, O whither, O whither
I flee !"
(Thus the Lark hurried, mounting from the lea)
"Hills, countries, many waters glittering bright,

Whither I see, whither I see ! deeper, deeper, deeper,
whither I see, see, see ! ”

“ Gay Lark,” I said,

“ The song that’s bred

In happy nest may well to heaven make flight.”

“ There’s something, something sad,

I half remember ”—piped a broken strain.

“ Well sung, sweet Robin ! Robin, sing again.”

“ Spring’s opening cheerily, cheerily ! be we glad ! ”

Which moved, I wist not why, me melancholy mad,

Till now, grown meek,

With wetted cheek,

Most comforting and gentle thoughts I had.

VI.—LOVELY MARY DONNELLY.

O II, lovely Mary Donnelly, ’tis you I love the best !

If fifty girls were round you, I’d hardly see the rest ;
Be what it may the time o’ day, the place be where it will,
Sweet looks o’ Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that’s flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are ! they give me
many a shock ;

Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a show’r,
Could ne’er express the charming lip that has me in its
pow’r.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup,
Her hair’s the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine ;
It’s rolling down upon her neck, and gather’d in a twine.

The dance o’ last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before,
No pretty girl for miles about was missing from the floor ;
But Mary kept the belt o’ love, and O but she was gay !
She danced a jig, she sang a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so
complete
The music nearly kill'd itself to listen to her feet ;
The fiddler moan'd his blindness, he heard her so much
praised,
But bless'd his luck to not be deaf when once her voice
she raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my
tongue ;
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both
your hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

'Tis you're the flower o' womankind in country or in town ;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your
beauty bright,
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

O might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall !
O might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods o' grass the only roof, and mud the only wall !

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress.
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor
and low ;
But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go !

George MacDonald.

1824.

GEORGE MACDONALD—better known to the general public as a novelist, than as a poet—was born in Huntly, in Aberdeenshire, Dec. 10th, 1824. He received his early education at the Parish School there, and afterwards was a distinguished student of King's College, Aberdeen, where he took his degree. The atmosphere, and the conditions of his boyhood and youth are vividly sketched in his earlier and more noted novels which deal with Scottish life—"David Elginbrod," "Alec Forbes," "Robert Falconer," "The Marquis of Lossie," and "Sir Gibbie." Along with remarkable power of character-drawing, there are constant reminiscences of religious struggle, revolt against the dogmas of Calvinism, and the desire to weaken their hold on the human mind in favour of a freer and more gracious construction of Scripture. "Unspoken Sermons" only set into slightly more formal shape, a deposit of teaching which is unmistakable in all Dr. Macdonald's more serious work—in which there is much we can refer to early influences. After quitting the university he studied for the Congregational ministry at Highbury College, and, for a time, was pastor of a church at Arundel. He soon retired, however; became a lay member of the Church of England, and devoted himself to literature, having settled in London. His

first work was a dramatic poem—"Within and Without," of which we shall speak more particularly later; then came "Poems," and following this the remarkably beautiful phantasy, "Phantastes"; then came the novels we have mentioned. These were followed by a series dealing more directly with English life—the most notable of which is perhaps "The Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood," which was succeeded by "The Seaboard Parish." Dr. MacDonald has suffered much from ill-health, which has led him for some years past to spend the winters in Italy—but he has, notwithstanding, been signally productive, and the mere list of his works were too long to quote here. His novels are all marked by singular elevation and purity, by fancy, and occasionally by dramatic force and humour of a very original and refined type.

Notwithstanding that his success as a novelist has eclipsed his fame as a poet, it is not too much to say that Dr. MacDonald is primarily a poet—a romantic poet. He has the true lyrical bent and impetus, a fertile fancy, and occasional notes at once sweet and new. And though all this is qualified in some respects by a love of mysticism, and a tendency to theological speculation, there can be no doubt that he is truly individual, and, when at his best, is penetrating,—felicitous, we might say, unique. The very element that is likely to hinder his wide popularity will commend him the more to lovers of poetry and students of literature. A certain quaint scholasticism goes hand in hand with the freshest conception and the liveliest fancy. A learned and academic flavour sometimes emphasises his broad and generous beliefs, and gives point to the occa-

sional almost colloquial element in his verse. He is, in truth, a Christian optimist, preaching "the larger hope" in no vague or dreamy way, and yet his subtle and quaint music is inlaid, and sometimes even overlaid with fancies that now and then approach to conceits. He is as earnest as Milton, but he is as fanciful and as much inclined to brood over his own images as Spenser. He is the humanest, the gentlest, the most steadily uplooking of all the poets of revolt, as we may call them. But a poet of revolt he truly is — aiming at teaching a broader and more tender theology, in which the oneness of men through the common fatherhood of God shall be recognised. And this, not only in hymn, and religious verse strictly; his nature-verses are full of it, and the glow and colour which we occasionally find in them must largely be traced to this. For him nature truly is at once the face and the veil of God. In him the worshipper and the poet can hardly be separated. He kneels as he sings. How significant of this is that beautiful sonnet—"This Infant World"—which has not yet had the notice it deserves alike for its idea and its form:

"This infant world has taken long to make!
Nor hast thou done the making of it yet,
But wilt be working on when death has set
A new mound in some churchyard for my sake.
On flow the centuries without a break;
Uprise the mountains, ages without let;
The lichen sucks the rock's heart—food they get:
Years more than past the young earth yet will take.
But in the dumbness of the rolling time,
No veil of silence shall encompass me—
Thou wilt not once forget, and let me be:
Rather wouldst thou some old chaotic prime
Invade, and with a tenderness sublime,
Unfold a world that I, thy child, might see."

Such too is truly the spirit of that "Prayer for the Past," in the section titled "Organ Songs."

"Oh, let me be a child once more,
To dream the glories of the gloom ;
The climbing suns and starry store
That ceiled my little room."

Of the very suggestive and musical poem, titled "Rest," the same might be said, and in a still more emphatic sense of that exquisite child's poem, "What makes Summer ?" And this finds, to our mind, its ultimate expression in that more carefully modelled and suggestive lyric, without title—beginning

"I know what beauty is, for thou
Hast set the world within my heart ;"

and ending

"I lose to find. On white-robed bride
Fair jewels fairest light afford ;
So, gathered round thy glory, Lord,
All glory else is glorified."

It is true even of that dainty bit of Scotch, which he classes as a ballad :

"Oh the bonny, bonny dell whar the yorlin sings
Wi' a clip o' the sunshine atween her wings."

And even into the most direct nature-poems there is, because of this element, introduced, not seldom, a touch of parable. The whole section, "Songs of the Days and Nights," is full of evidences of this. Here is a specimen :

"O night, send up the harvest moon
To walk about the fields,
And make of midnight magic noon
On lonely tarns and wealds.
In golden ranks, with golden crowns,
All in the yellow land,
Old solemn kings in rustling gowns,
The sheaves moon-charmed stand."

Another striking instance, in our idea, will be found at the end of "The Autumn Song," in "Violin Songs":—

"Brother, if thy sorrow lingers
O'er some withered thing,
Mark at least that autumn fingers
Paint in hues of spring."

The tendency to parable is very marked in Dr. MacDonald. He moralises his themes through the most dainty exercise of fancy. The element of parable goes much farther than the section so headed in his collected poems. There is much of it in the section headed "Ballads"—especially in "The Unseen Model," and in that beautiful poem—"A New Sermon on an Old Text"—which embodies the story of the Woolly Comforter, and indeed, throughout this section, as well as in "Roadside Poems," and in that wonderfully delicate and beautiful poem "The Sangreal." "The Golden Key," and "Sir Lark and King Sun," whatever they may be in form, are not in spirit more parabolic than those. The mystic undertone indeed lends itself to this, and when "The Book of Sonnets concerning Jesus," with their mingled mysticism and simplicity, more especially the twelfth: "But as thou camest forth," and the section "A Book of Dreams," "Somnium Mystici," are read this cannot but be felt. The Christmas Carol,—"Babe Jesus lay in Mary's lap," has more of concentration than some of the poems in the section, and in lines here and there is at once simple, direct, clear. Even in hymn, whenever any action or incident is touched, straight-way the work is transformed into parable. In "Blind Bartimeus," we not only have a record; it is a

parable: the blindness of Bartimeus is at one touch converted into human darkness to spiritual truth and life, and this without any descent to formal lesson; it is diffused, so to say, and is thus only the more effective. Though this, indeed, might conflict with its force for congregational singing, say,—that is, as a hymn proper, it adds greatly to its worth as a religious poem or spiritual song to be read only. So too with the “Songs of Gospel Women.” “Mary Magdalene” and the “Syrophœnician Woman” particularly impress us in this way.

“Oh, happy she who will not tire,
But, baffled, prayeth still!
What if he grant her heart’s desire
In fulness of her will?”

Some of Dr. MacDonald’s spiritual songs are, however, marked by the utmost simplicity, and particularly we think, as we write, of that sweet lyric, “The Grace of Grace,”—

“Had I the grace to win the grace
Of some old man in lore complete,
My face would worship at his face,
And I sit lowly at his feet.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of childhood, loving, shy, apart,
The child should find a nearer place,
And teach me resting on my heart.

Had I the grace to win the grace
Of maiden living all above,
My soul would trample down the base,
That she might have a man to love.

A grace I had no grace to win
Knocks now at my half-open door:
Ah! Lord of glory, come thou in;—
Thy grace divine is all, and more!”

But, if we remember rightly, in its first form it read:—

“ Had I the grace to win the grace
Of some old man complete in lore,
My face would worship at his face,
Like childhood seated on the floor.”

And we confess we almost prefer this first reading.

Dr. MacDonald's dramatic poem, “Within and Without,” has many powerful passages; but, despite the form, it would furnish many instances and illustrations of what we have said. The subject is the obtaining one with Dr. MacDonald: the awakening of a soul to a sense of a solution of all mysteries, and the finding of all beauty in the face of Christ; and though diffuse, there are touches that could have come only from a true and inspired poet. Julian, in some aspects, is powerfully presented. “The Hidden Life,” which in the *main lines* of the story has much in common with Mr. Robert Buchanan's “Poet Andrew,” is in treatment the very opposite of that adopted by the younger poet; and therein their contrasted characteristics might be seen. “The Disciple” is perhaps the most finished in some respects of Dr. MacDonald's poems: the leading idea of it is an oft-recurring one in his verse:—

“ Lord, thou hast much to make me yet—
A feeble infant still :
Thy thoughts, Lord, on my bosom set,
Fulfil me of thy will.
Even of thy truth, both in and out,
That so I question free
The man that feareth, Lord, to doubt
In that fear doubteth thee.”

But mingled mysticism and parable, though relieved

by quaint simplicity of style, tend inevitably to a kind of sweet and gentle diffuseness, and from this Dr. MacDonald does not always escape.

Dr. MacDonald is exquisite in Poems for Children. "Baby," save for a single peccant line—

"Out of the *everywhere* into here,"

(which, to our thinking, introduces too much of what involves pure abstraction for a poem of the sort)—is one of the most exquisite things in its line ever written; and "Little Bo Peep," and "Little Boy Blue," are fulfilled of fancy and the light of childhood. One or two of his "Scotch Ballads," too, are faithful and true, as for instance "The Waesome Carl," and the "Yerl of Waterydeck," which have the true beat and ring, and a ready humour, and half-careless buoyancy of movement. Our quotations are made from the author's own classified collection in "Works of Fancy and Imagination."

An original, penetrating, keenly sensitive, and musical poet Dr. MacDonald assuredly is; yet in much that he has written there is a certain remoteness, we might almost say bloodlessness, and a kind of freedom that sometimes seems akin to the fantastic, which, we fear, will militate more against his wide popularity than it ought to do, considering his other high qualities. But his sincerity and lofty aims, his purity, and his devotion, supported by fine imagination and a dreamy music, will do much to secure him a permanent place among England's true poets.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

PARABLES, SONGS, AND BALLADS.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

I.—THE HILLS.

BEHIND my father's cottage lies
A gentle grassy height,
Up which I often ran—to gaze
Back with a wondering sight ;
For on the chimneys I looked down—
So high—below me quite !

All round, where'er I turned mine eyes,
Huge hills closed up the view ;
The town, 'midst their converging roots,
Was clasped by rivers two ;
From one hill to another sprang
The sky's great vault of blue.

Oh, how I loved to climb their sides,
And in the heather lie !
From mighty vantage gazing down
On the castle grim and high ;
Blue streams below, white clouds above—
Unmoving in the sky !

And now, wherever I may roam,
At sight of stranger hill,
A new sense of the old delight
Springs in my bosom still ;
And longings for the high unknown
The ancient channels fill.

For I always climbing hills, .
From the known to the unknown—
Surely, at last, on some high peak,
To find my Father's throne,
Though hitherto I have only found
His footsteps in the stone.

And in my wanderings once I met
Another searching too ;
The dawning hope, the shared quest
Our hearts together drew :
She laid her trusting hand in mine,
Unquestioning and true.

She was not born among the hills,
Yet on every mountain face
A something known her inward eye
By inborn light can trace ;
For up all hills must homeward be,
Though no one knows the place.

Clasp my hand close in thine, my child—
A long way we have come !
Clasp my hand closer yet, my child,
We farther yet must roam—
Climbing and climbing, till we reach
Our heavenly Father's home.

II.—TELL ME.

“**T**RAVELLER, what lies over the hill ?
Traveller, tell to me :
Tiptoe-high on the window-sill,
Over I cannot see.”

"My child, a valley green lies there,
Lovely with trees, and shy ;
And a tiny brook that says — 'Take care,
Or I'll drown you by and by.' "

"And what comes next ?"—"A little town,
And a towering hill again ;
More hills and valleys, up and down,
And a river now and then."

"And what comes next ?"—"A lonely moor,
Without one beaten way ;
And slow clouds drifting dull before
A wind that will not stay."

"And then ?"—"Dark rocks and yellow sand,
Blue sea and a moaning tide."

"And then ?"—"More sea, more sea, more land,
With rivers deep and wide."

"And then ?"—"Oh—rock and mountain and vale,
Ocean and shores and men,
Over and over—a weary tale—
And round to your home again ! "

"And is that all ? From day to day—
As with a long chain bound—
Oh ! never to get right away,
But go round and round and round ? "

"No, no ; I have not told the best—
Neither the best nor the end :
On summer eves, away in the west,
You may see a stair ascend,

"Built of all colours of lovely stones—
A stair up into the sky,
Where no one is weary, and no one moans,
Or wants to be laid by."

"Is it far away?" "I do not know.
You must fix your eyes thereon,
And travel, travel, through thunder and snow,
Till the weary way is gone."

"All day, though you never see it shine,
You must travel, nor turn aside,
Through blinding sunlight and moonbeams fine,
And mist and darkness wide."

"When I am older." "Nay, not so."
I have hardly opened my eyes!"
"He who to the old sunset would go,
Starts best with the young sunrise."

"But the stair—is it very very steep?"
"Too steep for you to climb;
You must lie at the foot of the glorious heap,
And patient wait your time."

"How long?" "Nay, that I cannot tell."
In wind, and rain, and frost?"
"It may be." "Ah!—ah!" "It is well
That you should count the cost."

"Yea, travellers many on you will stand."
"That will be hard to bear."
"But one with wounded foot and hand
Will carry you up the stair."

III.—LONGING.

MY heart is full of inarticulate pain,
And beats laborious. Cold ungenial looks
Invade my sanctuary. Men of gain,

Wise in success, well-read in feeble books
No nigher come, I pray : your air is drear ;
'Tis winter and low skies when ye appear.

Beloved, who love beauty and fair truth !

Come nearer me ; too near ye cannot come ;
Make me an atmosphere with your sweet youth ;

Give me your souls to breathe in, a large room ;
Speak not a word, for see, my spirit lies
Helpless and dumb ; shine on me with your eyes.

O all wide places, far from feverous towns !

Great shining seas ! pine forests ! mountains wild !
Rock-bosomed shores ! rough heaths ! and sheep-
cropt downs !

Vast pallid clouds ! blue spaces undefiled !
Room ! give me room ! give loneliness and air !
Free things and plenteous in your regions fair.

White dove of David, flying overhead,

Golden with sunlight on thy snowy wings,
Outspeeding thee my longing thoughts are fled

To find a home afar from men and things ;
Where in his temple, earth o'erarched with sky,
God's heart to mine may speak, my heart reply.

O God of mountains, stars, and boundless spaces !

O God of freedom and of joyous hearts !
When thy face looketh forth from all men's faces,
There will be room enough in crowded marts ;
Brood thou around me, and the noise is o'er ;
Thy universe my closet with shut door.

Heart, heart, awake ! The love that loveth all
Maketh a deeper calm than Horeb's cave.
God in thee, can his children's folly gall ?
Love may be hurt, but shall not love be brave ?—
Thy holy silence sinks in dews of balm ;
Thou art my solitude, my mountain-calm.

IV.—BABY.

WHERE did you come from, baby dear ?
Out of the everywhere into here.
Where did you get those eyes so blue ?
Out of the sky as I came through.
What makes the light in them sparkle and spin ?
Some of the starry spikes left in.
Where did you get that little tear ?
I found it waiting when I got here.
What makes your forehead so smooth and high ?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.
What makes your cheek like a warm white rose ?
I saw something better than any one knows.
Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss ?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.
Where did you get this pearly ear ?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.
Where did you get those arms and hands ?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.
Feet, whence did you come, you darling things ?
From the same box as the cherubs' wings.
How did they all just come to be you ?
God thought about me, and so I grew.
But how did you come to us, you dear ?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

V.—DORCAS.

IF I might guess, then guess I would :—
Amid the gathered folk,
This gentle Dorcas one day stood,
And heard what Jesus spoke.
She saw the woven seamless coat—
Half envious for his sake :
“ Oh, happy hands,” she said, “ that wrought
That honoured thing to make !”
Her eyes with longing tears grow dim
She never can come nigh
To work one service poor for him
For whom she glad would die !
But hark ! he speaks a mighty word :
She hearkens now indeed !
“ When did we see thee naked, Lord,
And clothed thee in thy need ?
“ The King shall answer, Inasmuch
As to my brothers ye
Did it—even to the least of such—
Ye did it unto me.”
Home, home she went, and plied the loom,
And Jesus’ poor arrayed.
She died—they wept about the room,
And showed the coats she made.

VII.—BLIND BARTIMEUS.

AS Jesus went into Jericho town,
’Twas darkness all, from toe to crown,
About blind Bartimeus.
He said, “ When eyes are so very dim,
They are no use for seeing him ;
No matter—he can see us.

“Cry out, cry out, blind brother—cry ;
 Let not salvation dear go by.—
 Have mercy, Son of David.”
 Though they were blind, they both could hear—
 They heard, and cried, and he drew near ;
 And so the blind were saved.

O Jesus Christ, I am very blind ;
 Nothing comes through into my mind ;
 ’Tis well I am not dumb :
 Although I see thee not, nor hear,
 I cry because thou may’st be near :
 O Son of Mary, come.

I hear it through the all things blind :
 Is it thy voice, so gentle and kind—
 “Poor eyes, no more be dim” ?
 A hand is laid upon mine eyes ;
 I hear, and hearken, see, and rise—
 ’Tis He : I follow him.

• VII.—*THE YERL O’ WATERYDECK.*

THE wind it blew, and the ship it flew ;
 And it was “Hey for hame !”
 But up and cried the skipper to his crew,
 “Haud her oot ower the saut sea faem.”
 Syne up and spak the angry king :
 “Haud on for Dumferline !”
 Quo the skipper, “My lord, this maunna be—
 I’m king on this boat o’ mine.”
 He tuik the helm intill his han’ ;
 He left the shore un’er the lee ;
 Syne croodit sail, an’ east and south
 Stude awa’ richt oot to sea.

Quo the king, "There's treason i' this, I vow ;
This is something un'erhan' !
'Bout ship !" Quo the skipper, "Yer grace forgets
Ye are king but o' the lan' !"

Oot he held to the open sea
Quhill the north wind flaughtered and fell ;
Syn the east had a bitter word to say,
That waukent a watery hell.

He turned her heid intill the north :
Quo the nobles : "He s' droon, by the mass !"
Quo the skipper : "Haud aff yer lady-han's,
Or ye'll never see the Bass."

The king creepit doon the cabin-stair
To drink the gude French wine ;
An' up cam' his dochter, the princess fair,
And luikit ower the brine.

She turned her face to the drivin' snaw,
To the snaw but and the weet ;
It claucht her snood, an' awa' like a clud,
Her hair drave oot i' the sleet.

She turned her face frae the drivin' win'—
"Quhat's that aheid ?" quo she.
The skipper he threw himsel' frae the win',
And he drove the helm alee.

"Put to yer han', my lady fair !
Haud up her heid," quo he ;
"Gin she dinna face the win' a wee mair,
It's the waur for you and me !"

To the tiller the lady she laid her han',
And the ship laid her cheek to the blast ;
They joukit the berg, but her quarter scraped,
And they luikit at ither aghast.

Quo the skipper : "Ye are a lady fair,
An' a princess gran' to see ;
But war ye a milkmaid, a man wad sail
To hell i' yer company."

She liftit a pale an' a queenly face ;
Her een flashed, and syne they swam :
"And what for no to the lift ?" she says—
And she returned awa' frae him.

Bot she took na her han' frae the gude ship's helm
Till the day began to daw ;
And the skipper he spak, but what was said
It was said atween them twa.

And syne the gude ship she lay to,
Wi' Scotlan' far un'er the lee ;
And the king cam up the cabin-stair,
Wi' wan face and bluidshot ee.

Laigh loutit the skipper upo' the deck ;
"Stan' up, stan' up," quo the king ;
"Ye're an honest loun—an' ask me a boon
Quhan ye gie me back this ring."

Lowne blew the win' ; the stars cam oot ;
The ship turned frae the north ;
An' or ever the sun was up an' aboot,
They war intill the firth o' Forth.

Quhan the gude ship hung at the pier-heid,
And the king stude steady on the lan'—
"Doon wi' ye, skipper—doon !" he said,
"Hoo daur ye afore me stan' ?"

The skipper he louted on his knee ;
The king his blade he drew :
Quo the king, "Hoo daured ye contre me ?—
I'm aboard my ain ship noo !

"Gin I hadna been yer verra gude lord,
I wad hac thrawn yer neck !
Bot—ye wha loutit Skipper o' Doon,
Rise up Yerl o' Waterydeck."

The skipper he rasena : "Yer grace is great ;
Yer will can heize or ding ;
Wi' ae wee word ye hac made me a yerl—
Wi' anither mak me a king."

"I canna mak ye a king," quo he,
"The Lord alane can do that ;
I snowk leise-majesty, my man !
Quhat the deevil wad ye be at ? "

Glowert at the skipper the doutsum king,
Jalousin' aneth his croon ;
Quo the skipper, "Here is yer grace's ring—
An' yer dochter is my boon."

The black blude shot intill the king's face—
He wasna bonny to sec :
"The rascal skipper ! he lichtlies oor grace !—
Gar hang him heigh on yon tree."

Up sprang the skipper an' aboard his ship ;
He caught up a bitin' blade ;
He hackit at the cable that held her to the pier,
An' he thocht it ower weel made.

The king he blew hard in a siller whustle ;
And tramp, tramp, doon the pier,
Cam twenty horsemen on twenty horses,
Clankin' wi' spur and spear.

At the king's fit fell his dochter fair :
"His life ye wadna spill !"
"Daur ye to sunder me and my hate ?"
"I daur, wi' a richt gude will !"

“Ye was aye to yer faither a thrawart bairn ;
But, my lady, I am yer king ;
An’ ye daurna luik me i’ the face,
For a monarch’s anither thing.”

“I lout to my father for his grace,
Low on my bendit knee ;
But I stan’ and luik the king i’ the face,
For the skipper is king o’ me.”

She turned ; she sprang upo’ the deck ;
The cable splashed i’ the Forth ;
Her wings sae braid the gude ship spread,
And flew east and syne flew north.

Now was not this a king’s dochter—
A lady that feared no skaith—
An’ a woman wi’ quhilk a man might sail
Prood intill the port o’ Death ?

Francis Turner Palgrave.

1825.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE—poet and critic—is a son of Sir Francis Turner Palgrave, the historian of the Norman Conquest. He was born in 1825, and after a distinguished career at Oxford, where he was a Fellow of Exeter College, and subsequently Professor of Poetry, he became an Examiner in the office of the Committee of Council on Education, from which he was detached for a time, to act as Vice-Principal, under Dr. Temple, afterwards Bishop of London, of the Government Training College for schoolmasters at Kneller Hall. On the abandonment of the College, he returned to the office at Whitehall, and subsequently became an Assistant Secretary. After thirty-five years' distinguished service, he retired in 1885.

By nature, by training, and by predilection, Mr. Palgrave was eminently fitted for a purely literary career. Like his distinguished colleague and friend, Mr. Matthew Arnold, who was an Inspector of Schools under the same Committee of Council, Mr. Palgrave recognised the immense importance of clearness and lucidity in the administration of affairs, and these qualities he brought to his criticism and to his original poetry; and it is characteristic of him that the dedication of the fruits of his diligently cultivated leisure—"Lyrical Poems"—

should be to the "Immortal Memory of Free Athens."
"Where," he asks,—

"Where are the flawless form,
The sweet propriety of measured phrase,
The words that clothe the idea, not disguise,
Horizons pure from haze,
And calm clear vision of Hellenic eyes?"

"Strength ever veiled by grace ;
The mind's anatomy implied, not shown ;
No gaspings for the vague, no fruitless fires ;—
Yet heard 'neath all, the tone
Of those far realms to which the soul aspires."

This is the key-note to all Mr. Palgrave's writing, whether in prose or verse. He is masculine, dignified, large, lucid. There is a studious simplicity, a singular fitness, both in his phraseology and his style. He is never carried away by his subject, and his critical faculties always seem to reign supreme. And yet he knows well the value of feeling in poetry. Of childhood, girlhood, and womanhood, of Love Mr. Palgrave sings with rare delicacy and originality. His verse is characterised by graceful and dignified simplicity, but there is no lack of fire and vigour when the subject calls for them. Witness that really admirable collection of poems, "*Visions of England*," in which Mr. Palgrave has given us upwards of fifty poems of great variety and high merit on leading men and events of English history. Bishop Stubbs wrote of this work, "I do not think that there is one of the *Visions* which does not carry my thorough consent and sympathy all through." We venture to add that the collection should be a class book in every school.

H. J. GIBBS.

LYRICAL POEMS.

1871.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.

I.—A SONG OF LIFE.

'TIS the same sun and stars, my Love,
That o'er our parents shone
Through the brief beauty of their day,
And when we also are as they
Will yet shine on, shine on :—
Then mid the roses let us sing,
As mid the roses they did ;
For life will bring no second spring
When summer once is faded.

'Tis the same sun and stars, my Love,
That saw their childish glee ;
And rising still, and setting still,
So smiling, and so shouting, will
Their children's children see :—
Then mid the roses let us sing,
As mid the roses they did ;
For life will bring no second spring
When summer once is faded.

'Tis the same sun and stars, my Love,
That saw them, worn and gray,
Smile bright and brave on instant Death ;
—And who, that breathes our human breath,
Would bear to live for aye ?
Then mid the roses let us sing,
As mid the roses they did ;
For life will bring no second spring
When summer once is faded.

II.—EUGENIA.

WHAT pearl of price within her lay
I could not know when first I met her
So little studious for herself,

Almost she ask'd we should forget her :
As the rose-heart at prime of dawn,
Herself within herself withdrawn :
And yet we felt that something there
Was fairer than the fairest fair.

I mark'd her goings through the day,
Intent upon her maiden mission :
The manners moulded on the mind ;
The flawless sense, the sweet decision.
So gracious to the hands she task'd,
She seem'd to do the thing she ask'd :
And then I knew that something there
Was fairer than the fairest fair.

Her eyes spoke peace ; and voice and step
The message of her eyes repeated :
Truth halo-bright about her brows,
And Faith on the fair forehead seated,
And lips where Candour holds his throne,
And sense and sweetness are at one :
I look and look ; and something there
Is fairer than the fairest fair.

As some still upward-gazing lake
Round which the mountain-rampart closes
Crystalline bright and diamond pure,
In azure depth of peace reposes ;
And Heaven comes down with all its grace
To find itself within her face ;
And the heart owns that something there
Is fairer than the fairest fair.

“O just and faithful child of God !
 Thrice happy he,” I cried, “who by her
 Finds in her eyes the home of home,
 Reads in her smile his heart’s desire ;
 The smile of beauty from above
 Of equable and perfect love !”
 —I sigh’d—she smiled ; and something there
 Was fairer than the fairest fair.

III.—A SONG OF SPRING AND AUTUMN.

IN the season of white wild roses
 We two went hand in hand :
 But now in the ruddy autumn
 Together already we stand.
 O pale pearl-necklace that wander’d
 O’er the white-thorn’s tangled head !
 The white-thorn is turn’d to russet,
 The pearls to purple red !
 On the topmost orchard branches
 It then was crimson and snow ;
 Where now the gold-red apples
 Burn on the turf below.
 And between the trees the children
 In and out run hand in hand ;
 And, with smiles that answer their smiling,
 We two together stand.

IV.—EUTOPIA.

THERE is a garden where lilies
 And roses are side by side ;
 And all day between them in silence
 The silken butterflies glide.

I may not enter the garden,
Though I know the road thereto ;
And morn by morn to the gateway
I see the children go.

They bring back light on their faces ;
But they cannot bring back to me
What the lilies say to the roses,
Or the songs of the butterflies be.

V.—THE HEREAFTER.

SIGH not, fair Mother, as thou seest
The little nursery at thy feet ;
Three golden heads together bent
Like statesmen o'er some scheme profound and sweet
Convened in their more gracious Parliament.

Sigh not, if o'er thy faithful heart
Keen shadows of the future go ;
The tortures dormant in the frame ;
The woes of want and wrong ; the sterner woe
Of souls that start, and own a hidden shame.

Fenced from the frosty gales of ill
Man slips through life unmade, unbraced :—
As honey from the flint-rock shed
Wrong bravely borne, the brunt of pain well faced,
Rain in soft blessings on the gallant head.

Endure ! Endure !—Life's lesson so
Is written large in sea and earth :
And He who gave us wider scope
Than the dumb things that struggle from their birth,
Sets in our sky a star of higher hope.

And with more joy than one who treads
 The road with never-swerving strength,
 His future-piercing eyes survey
 Those who, wide-roving, to the fold at length
 Trace with thorn-redden'd feet their final way.
 —Then sigh not, if the smiling band
 Their unforesightful brightness keep,
 And garner sunbeams for the day
 When those dear stainless eyes may yearn to weep
 The natural drops that cannot force their way.
 He who has made us, and foresees
 Our tears, to thy too-anxious gaze
 The long Hereafter gently spares:—
 Only his Love shines forth, through all their days
 Pledged to the children of so many prayers.

VI.—PAST AND PRESENT.

AS I hear the breath of the mother
 To the breath of the child at her feet
 Answer in even whispers,
 When night falls heavy and sweet :
 Sleep puts out silent fingers,
 And leads me back to the roar
 Of the dead salt sea that vomits
 Wrecks of the past ashore.
 I see the lost Love in beauty
 Go gliding over the main :
 I feel the ancient sweetness,
 The worm and the wormwood again.
 Earth all one tomb lies round me,
 Domed with an iron sky :
 And *God Himself in His power,*
God cannot save me ! I cry.

With the cry I wake ;—and around me
The mother and child at her feet
Breathe peace in even whispers ;
And the night falls heavy and sweet.

VII.—THE LINNET IN NOVEMBER.

LATE singer of a sunless day,
I know not if with pain
Or pleasure more, I hear thy lay
Renew its vernal strain.

As gleams of youth, when youth is o'er,
And bare the summer bowers,
Thy song brings back the years of yore,
And unreturning hours.

So was it once ! So yet again
It never more will be !
Yet sing ; and lend us in thy strain
A moment's youth with thee.

VIII.—THE THREE AGES.

ON the eve of the blessed birthday
The child in its cot is awake ;
And thinks how the stars are raining
Sweet gifts for Christmas' sake.

On the eve of the marriage morrow
The bride is unquiet by night ;
And the arrows of sunrise pierce her
With indefinite shy delight.

And Age lies sleepless and yearning
For child and mother afar ;
But the light that shines on their faces
Is farther than sun or star.

—O broken are and unmeaning,
 Though the fragments are so sweet,
 If the curve be not one hereafter,
 And the circle of love complete !

IX.—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

1845.

GENTLE and grave, in simple dress,
 And features by keen mountain air
 Moulded to solemn ruggedness,
 The man we came to see sat there :
 Not apt for speech, nor quickly stirr'd
 Unless when heart to heart replied ;
 A bearing equally removed
 From vain display or sullen pride.

The sinewy frame yet spoke of one
 Known to the hillsides : on his head
 Some five-and-seventy winters gone
 Their crown of perfect white had shed :—
 As snow tipp'd summits toward the sun
 In calm of lonely radiance press,
 Touch'd by the broadening light of death
 With a sereener pensiveness.

O crown of venerable age !
 O brighter crown of well-spent years !
 The bard, the patriot, and the sage,
 The heart that never bow'd to fears !
 That was an age of soaring souls ;
 Yet none with a more liberal scope
 Survey'd the sphere of human things ;
 None with such manliness of hope.

Others, perchance, as keenly felt,
As musically sang as he ;
To Nature as devoutly knelt,
Or toil'd to serve humanity :
But none with those ethereal notes,
That star-like sweep of self-control ;
The insight into worlds unseen,
The lucid sanity of soul.

The fever of our fretful life,
The autumn poison of the air,
The soul with its own self at strife,
He saw and felt, but could not share :
With eye made clear by pureness, pierced
The life of Man and Nature through ;
And read the heart of common things,
Till new seem'd old, and old was new.

To his own self not always just,
Bound in the bonds that all men share,—
Confess the failings as we must,
The lion's mark is always there !
Nor any song so pure, so great,
Since his, who closed the sightless eyes,
Our Homer of the war in Heaven,
To wake in his own Paradise.

—O blaring trumpets of the world !
O glories, in their budding sere !
O flaunting roll of Fame unfurl'd !
Here was the king—the hero here !
It was a strength and joy for life
In that great presence once to be ;
That on the boy he gently smiled,
That those white hands were laid on me.

THE VISIONS OF ENGLAND.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE.

I.—PAULINUS AND EDWIN.

(627.)

THE black-hair'd gaunt Paulinus
By ruddy Edwin stood :—
'Bow down, O King of Deira,
Before the holy Rood !
Cast forth thy demon idols,
And worship Christ our Lord !'
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd,
And answer'd not a word.

Again the gaunt Paulinus
To ruddy Edwin spake :
'God offers life immortal
For His dear Son's own sake !
Wilt thou not hear his message
Who bears the Keys and Sword ?'
—But Edwin look'd and ponder'd,
And answer'd not a word.

Rose then a sage old warrior ;
Was five-score winters old ;
Whose beard from chin to girdle
Like one long snow-wreath roll'd :—
'At Yule-tide in our chamber
We sit in warmth and light,
While cavern-black around us
Lies the grim mouth of Night.

'Athwart the room a sparrow
Darts from the open door :
Within the happy hearth-light
One red flash,—and no more !

We see it born from darkness,
And into darkness go :—
So is our life, King Edwin !
Ah, that it should be so !

‘ But if this pale Paulinus
Have somewhat more to tell ;
Some news of whence and whither,
And where the Soul may dwell :—
If on that outer darkness
The sun of Hope may shine ;—
He makes life worth the living !
I take his God for mine ! ’

So spake the wise old warrior ;
And all about him cried
‘ Paulinus’ God hath conquer’d !
And he shall be our guide :—
For he makes life worth living,
Who brings this message plain,—
When our brief days are over,
That we shall live again.’

II.—EDITH OF ENGLAND.

(1100.)

THROUGH sapling shades of summer green,
By glade and height and hollow,
Where Rufus rode the stag to bay,
King Henry spurs a jocund way,
Another chase to follow.
But when he came to Romsey gate
The doors are open’d free,
And through the gate like sunshine streams
A maiden company :—

One girdled with the vervain-red,
And three in sendal gray,
And touch the trembling rebeck-strings
To their soft roundelay ;—
—The bravest knight may fail in fight,
The red rust edge the sword,
The king his crown in dust lay down,
But Love is always Lord !
King Henry at her feet flings down,
His helmet ringing loudly :—
His kisses worship Edith's hand ;
' Wilt thou be Queen of all the land ?
—O red she blush'd and proudly !
Red as the crimson girdle bound
Beneath her gracious breast ;
Red as the silken scarf that flames
Above his lion-crest.
She lifts and casts the cloister-veil
All on the cloister-floor :—
The novice maids of Romsey smile,
And think of love once more.
' Well, well, to blush ! ' the Abbess cried,
The veil and vow deriding
That rescued thee, in baby days,
From insolence of Norman gaze,
In pure and holy hiding.
—O royal child of South and North,
Malcolm and Margaret,
The promised bride of Heaven art thou,
And Heaven will not forget !
What reck's it, if an alien King
Encoronet thy brow,
Or if the false Italian priest
Pretend to loose the vow ? '

O then to white the red rose went
 On Edith's cheek abiding!
 With even glance she answer'd meek
 'I leave the life I did not seek,
 In holy Church confiding':—
 Then Love smiled true on Henry's face,
 And Anselm join'd the hands
 That in one race two races bound
 By everlasting bands.
 So Love is Lord, and Alfred's blood
 Returns the land to sway;
 And all her joyous maidens join
 In their soft roundelay :

—For though the knight may fail in fight,
 The red rust edge the sword,
 The king his crown in dust lay down,
 Yet Love is always Lord !

III.—THE CHILDLESS MOTHER.

(1700—1702.)

OFt in midnight visions
 Ghostly by my bed
 Stands a Father's image,
 Pale discrownèd head :—
 —I forsook thee, Father !
 Was no child to thee !
 Child-forsaken Mother,
 Now 'tis so with me.

Oft I see the brother,
 Baby born to woe,
 Crouching by the church-wall
 From the bloodhound-foe.

Evil crown'd of evil,
Heritage of strife !
Mine, an heirless sceptre :
His, an exile life !

—O my vanish'd darlings,
From the cradle torn !
Dewdrop lives, that never
Saw their second morn !
Buds that fell untimely,—
Till one blossom grew ;
As I watch'd its beauty,
Fading whilst it blew.

Thou wert more to me, Love,
More than words can tell ;
All my remnant sunshine
Died in one farewell.
Midnight-mirk before me
Now my life goes by,
For the baby faces
As in vain I cry.

O the little footsteps
On the nursery floor !
Lispings light and laughter
I shall hear no more !
Eyes that gleam'd at waking
Through their silken bars ;
Starlike eyes of children,
Now beyond the stars !

Where the murder'd Mary
Waits the rising sign,
They are laid in darkness,
Little lambs of mine.

Only this can comfort :
Safe from earthly harms
Christ the Saviour holds them
In His loving arms :—

Spring eternal round Him,
Roses ever fair :—
Will His mercy set them
All beside me there ?
Will their Angels guide me
Through the golden gate ?
—Wait a little, children !
Mother, too, must wait !

IV.—TRAFALGAR.

(October 21, 1805.)

HEARD ye the thunder of battle
Low in the South and afar ?
Saw ye the flash of the death-cloud
Crimson o'er Trafalgar ?
Such another day never
England will look on again,
When the battle fought was the hottest,
And the hero of heroes was slain !
For the fleet of France and the force of Spain were
gather'd for fight,
A greater than Philip their lord, a new Armada in
might :—
And the sails were aloft once more in the deep
Gaditanian bay,
Where *Redoubtable* and *Bucentaure* and great *Trini-*
dada lay ;
Eager-reluctant to close ; for across the bloodshed
to be

Two navies beheld one prize in its glory,—the
throne of the sea!
Which were bravest, who should tell? for both
were gallant and true;
But the greatest seaman was ours, of all that sail'd
o'er the blue.

From Cadiz the enemy sallied: they knew not
Nelson was there;
His name a navy to us, but to them a flag of despair.
'Twixt Algeziras and Ayamonte he guarded the coast,
Till he bore from Tavira south; and they now must
fight, or be lost;—
Vainly they steer'd for the Rock and the Midland
sheltering sea,
For he headed the Admirals round, constraining
them under his lee,
Villeneuve of France, and Gravina of Spain: so they
shifted their ground,
They could choose, —they were more than we;—and
they faced at Trafalgar round;
Rampart-like ranged in line, a sea-fortress angrily
tower'd
In the midst, four-storied with guns, the dark *Trini-*
dada lower'd.

So with those,—But meanwhile, as against some
dyke that men massively rear,
From on high the torrent surges, to drive through
the dyke as a spear,
Eagled-eyed e'en in his blindness, our chief sets his
double array,
Making the fleet two spears, to thrust at the foe, any
way, . . .

‘Anyhow!—without orders, each captain his French-
man may grapple perforce :

Collingwood first’ (yet the *Victory* ne’er a whit
slacken’d her course)

‘Signal for action! Farewell! we shall win, but
we meet not again!’

—Then a low thunder of readiness ran from the
decks o’er the main,

And on,—as the message from masthead to masthead
flew out like a flame,

ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY,—
they came.

—Silent they come :—While the thirty black forts
of the foeman’s array

Clothe them in billowy snow, tier speaking o’er tier
as they lay ;

Flashes that thrust and drew in, as swords when
the battle is rife ;—

But ours stood frowningly smiling, and ready for
death as for life.

—O in that interval grim, ere the furics of slaughter
embrace,

Thrills o’er each man some far echo of England ;
some glance of some face !

—Faces gazing seaward through tears from the
ocean-girt shore ;

Faces that ne’er can be gazed on again till the death-
pang is o’er. . . .

Lone in his cabin the Admiral kneeling, and all his
great heart

As a child’s to the mother, goes forth to the loved
one, who bade him depart

. . . O not for death, but glory! her smile would
welcome him home !

—Louder and thicker the thunderbolts fall :—and
silent they come.

As when beyond Dongola the lion, whom hunters
attack,
Plagued by their darts from afar, leaps in, dividing
them back ;
So between Spaniard and Frenchman the *Victory*
wedged with a shout,
Gun against gun ; a cloud from her decks and
lightning went out ;
Iron hailing of pitiless death from the sulphury
smoke ;
Voices hoarse and parch'd, and blood from invisible
stroke.
Each man stood to his work, though his mates fell
smitten around,
As an oak of the wood, while his fellow, flame-
shatter'd, besplinters the ground :—
Gluttons of danger for England, but sparing the foe
as he lay ;
For the spirit of Nelson was on them, and each was
Nelson that day.

‘ She has struck ! ’—he shouted—‘ She burns, the
Redoubtable ! Save whom we can,
Silence our guns ’ :—for in him the woman was
great in the man,
In that heroic heart each drop girl-gentle and pure,
Dying by those he spared ;—and now Death’s
triumph was sure !
From the deck the smoke-wreath clear’d, and the
foe set his rifle in rest,
Dastardly aiming, where Nelson stood forth, with
the stars on his breast,—

'In honour I gained them, in honour I die with them' . . . Then, in his place,
Fell . . . 'Hardy! 'tis over; but let them not know': and he cover'd his face.
Silent, the whole fleet's darling they bore to the twilight below:
And above the war-thunder came shouting, as foe struck his flag after foe.

To his heart death rose: and for Hardy, the faithful, he cried in his pain,—
'How goes the day with us, Hardy?' . . . 'Tis ours':—Then he knew, not in vain,
Not in vain for his comrades and England he bled: how he left her secure,
Queen of her own blue seas, while his name and example endure.
O, like a lover he loved her! for her as water he pours
Life-blood and life and love, lavish'd all for her sake, and for ours!
—'Kiss me, Hardy!—Thank God!—I have done my duty!'—And then
Fled that heroic soul, and left not his like among men.

Hear ye the heart of a nation
Groan, for her saviour is gone;
Gallant and true and tender,
Child and chieftain in one?
Such another day never
England will weep for again,
When the triumph darken'd the triumph,
And the hero of heroes was slain.

Thomas Woolner.

1826.

To be, more or less, a master in two arts has been the fashion rather than the exception during the latter half of the century. One or two names will readily spring to the reader's tongue, and among them almost certainly that of Mr. Thomas Woolner. Mr. Woolner was born at Hadleigh, in Suffolk, December 17th, 1826, and was educated at Ipswich. At an early age he showed a marked talent for sculpture, and he began his training in the studio of William Behnes, under whose instruction he remained for six years. His first exhibit at the Royal Academy was "Eleanor sucking the Poison from Prince Edward's Wound" (1843), but his first marked success was made with a life-size group of "The Death of Boadicea," exhibited in Westminster Hall. This latter was considered to promise great things in the more imaginative style of sculpture, and from that dated the rapid recognition which has made Mr. Woolner a classic among modern sculptors. It is not, however, to our purpose here to trace the steps of that career, our concern being that literary achievement which has given him another, if not exactly an equal, fame.

Mr. Woolner first appears as a poet, in 1850, in connection with the historical Pre-Raphaelite magazine, *The Germ*—which, by the way, hand-

books with a naïve literalness describe as "a short-lived periodical." In this, as every one, of course, knows, he took a leading part, his best-known poem, "My Beautiful Lady," being originally printed in detachments in its pages. This poem was reprinted in volume form in 1863, reaching a third edition by 1866 (with a delicious title-page vignette by Mr. Arthur Hughes), and recently it has been included in Messrs. Cassell's "National Library," along with a short poem, entitled "Daisy Miller." In 1862 Mr. Woolner went to Australia, where he resided for two years; and for the next twenty he seems to have been too hard at work on his sculpture to have leisure for verse.

However, in 1881 he published the appropriate poem of "Pygmalion," in 1884 "Silenus," and "Tiresias" in 1886. This, I believe, completes the list of his published verse.

Much praise has been lavished on the verse in "My Beautiful Lady," beginning—

"I love my Lady; she is very fair;
Her brow is wan, and bound by simple hair;
Her spirit sits aloof, and high,
But glances from her tender eye
In sweetness droopingly."

And very sweet these lines and some others in the same lyric are, but I would venture to say that the whole song needs knitting together, and also that in these lyrical measures Mr. Woolner is not to be read at his best. Looseness of texture is a fault that lies more or less against all his poetical work, but it applies least to his blank verse, of which measure he not infrequently manifests a really striking power. Take this passage from the introductory lines on "Love":—

"As from some height, on a wild day of cloud,
A wanderer, chilled and worn, perchance beholds
Move toward him through the landscape soaked in gloom ;
A golden beam of light ; creating lakes,
And verdant pasture, farms, and villages ;
And touching spires atop to flickering flame ;
Disclosing herds of sober feeding kine ;
And brightening on its way the woods to song ;
As he, that wanderer, brightens when the shaft
Suddenly falls on him. A moment warmed,
He scarcely feels its loveliness before
The light departing leaves his saddened soul
More cold than ere it came.

Thus love once shone
And blessed my life : so vanished into gloom."

The line which I have ventured to italicise seems to me by every test, to reach a very high level of poetry, and that it should so stand out from the rest is characteristic of Mr. Woolner's verse. It is poetry more of fine lines than fine poems, but such lines evince one of the two great qualities necessary to fine poetry, the power of phrase-making. If Mr. Woolner had only possessed the architectural faculty in a greater degree his poems would have been more perfect, but perhaps that very defect made him a great sculptor.

Strange to say that the poem from which one would naturally expect most really gives us least. The radical artistic flaw of Mr. Woolner's "Pygmalion" seems to me in treating the story historically instead as a symbolic myth. Galatea therein appears but as the model of Pygmalion, and Mr. Woolner seeks to explain the old story away by attributing its origin to a playful remark of Pygmalion's, who, bringing Galatea down from his work-room one day after the statue had been finished and admired,

said to his mother, "Behold the statue has found breath, and I am going to take it to wife."

A bystander hearing this took it for a miracle, and the story was speedily running through the town. Hence the legend, says Mr. Woolner. Maybe, but all its significance as a symbol is absolutely lost in so domestic an interpretation.

"Silenus" is, I think, Mr. Woolner's finest poem. Some of the pictures and the imagery therein are powerful almost to brutality.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

MY BEAUTIFUL LADY.

1850—1863.

THOMAS WOOLNER.

I.—DAWN.

O LILY with the heavenly sun
Shining upon thy breast !
My scattered passions toward thee run,
And poise to awful rest.

The darkness of our universe
Smothered my soul in night ;
Thy glory shone ; whereat the curse
Passed molten into light.

Raised over envy ; freed from pain ;
Beyond the storms of chance :
Blessed king of my own world I reign,
Controlling circumstance.

II.—WILD ROSE.

TO call My Lady where she stood
“ A Wild-rose blossom of the wood, ’
Makes but a poor similitude.

For who by such a sleight would reach
An aim, consumes the worth in speech,
And sets a crimson rose to bleach.

My Love, whose store of household sens
Gives duty golden recompense,
And arms her goodness with defence :

The sweet reliance of whose gaze
Originates in gracious ways,
And wins the trust that trust repays :

Whose stately figure's varying grace
Is never seen unless her face
Turn beaming toward another place ;
For such a halo round it glows
Surprised attention only knows
A lively wonder in repose.

Can flowers that breathe one little day
In odorous sweetness life away,
And wavering to the earth decay,
Have any claim to rank with her,
Warmed in whose soul impulses stir,
Then bloom to goodness ; and aver

Her worth through spherul joys shall move
When suns and systems cease above,
And nothing lives but perfect Love ?

III.—HER SHADOW.

AT matin time where creepers interlace
We sauntered slowly, for we loved the place,
And talked of passing things ; I, pleased to trace
Through leafy mimicry the true leaves made,
The stateliness and beauty of her shade ;

A wavering of strange purples dimly seen,
It gloomed the daisy's light, the kingcup's sheen,
And drank up sunshine from the vital green.

That silent shadow moving on the grass
Struck me with terror it should ever pass

And be blank nothing in the coming years
Where, in the dreadful shadow of my fears,
Her shrouded form I saw through blurring tears,
My Darling's shrouded form in beauty's bloom
Born with funereal sadness to her tomb.

"What idle dreaming," I abruptly cried :
My Lady turned, half startled, at my side,
And looked inquiry : I, through shame or pride,
Bantered the words as mockery of sense,
Mere aimless freak of fostered indolence.

She did not urge me ; gentle, wise, and kind !
But clasped my hand and talked : her beaming mind
Arrayed in brightness all it touched. Behind,
Her shadow fell forgot, as she and I
Went homeward musing, smiling at the sky.

Through pastures and through fields where corn grew
strong ;

By cottage nests that could not harbour wrong ;
Across the bridge where laughed the stream ; along
The road to where her gabled mansion stood,
Old, tall, and spacious, in a massy wood.

We loitered toward the porch ; but paused meanwhile
Where Psyche holds a dial to beguile
The hours of sunshine by her golden smile ;
And holds it like a goblet brimmed with wine,
Nigh clad in trails of tangled eglantine.

In the deep peacefulness which shone around
My soul was soothed : no darksome vision frowned
Before my sight while cast upon the ground
Where Psyche's and My Lady's shadows lay,
Twin graces on the flower-edged gravel way.

I then but yearned for Titian's glorious power,
That I by toiling one devoted hour,
Might check the march of Time, and leave a dower
Of rich delight that beauty I could see,
For broadening generations yet to be.

IV.—GIVEN OVER.

THE men of learning say she must
Soon pass and be as if she had not been.
To gratify the barren lust
Of Death, the roses in her cheeks are seen
To blush so brightly, blooming deeper damascene.

All hope and doubt, all fears are vain :
The dreams I nursed of honouring her are past,
And will not comfort me again.
I see a lurid sunlight throw its last
Wild gleam athwart the land whose shadows lengthen fast

It does not seem so dreadful now
The horror stands out naked, stark, and still :
I am quite calm, and wonder how
My terror played such mad pranks with my will.
The North winds fiercely blow, I do not feel them chill.

All things must die : somewhere I read
What wise and solemn men pronounce of joy ;
No sooner born, they say, than dead :
The strife of being, but a whirling toy
Humming a weary moan spun by capricious boy.

Has my soul reached a starry height
Majestically calm ? No monster, drear
And shapeless, glares me faint at night ;
I am not in the sunshine checked for fear
That monstrous shapeless thing is somewhere crouching
near ?

No ; woe is me ! far otherwise :
The naked horror numbs me to the bone ;
In stupor calm its cold blank eyes
Set hard at mine. I do not fall or groan,
Our island Gorgon's face had changed me into stone.

PYGMALION.

18—.

THOMAS WOOLNER.

PYGMALION AND IANTHE.

(BOOK III.)

It was Ianthé's duty every noon
To bring Pygmalion bread, and fruit, and wine,
And place them in the chamber where he wrought.
At times she saw he heeded not ; so bound
Unto the dimly formed uncertain things
His active chisel laboured to release
From their confinement in the marble world.
She dared not break the spell : and quietly
Returned unnoticed. But more often he
Graciously owned the care and gentleness
She day by day bestowed. Then would she pour
For him the wine : offer the bread and fruit :
And maybe tarry to behold his skill
Translating into substance visible
Love's tenderness, or passion's smouldering depths.
How shaped Aglaia's cheek against the charm
Of Aphrodite's breast. How the sharp lines
Of agony Promethens must endure,
Tortured less cruelly his spacious brow :
Or gloomed the shades of power more deeply calm
And terrible within the eyes of Zeus.
Well pleased to watch from time to time the Gods,
And others, cleared of their embarrassment.

His Mother with Ianthé came one day
In azure June to watch her son at work ;
For she had fears unceasing toil might fret,
If left unminded, her Pygmalion's strength.
She would press on him nourishment, and plead
He took more rest and sportful exercise.

They found him mounted higher than the ground
Working at Cytherea's smile. His floor
Was overspread with mat, the Matron's slaves
Wove of green rushes, soft of pith, that he
Be spared unnecessary noise, even noise
Of his own footsteps, in those rarer moods
When thought is striving to complete itself.

Pausing, the Matron and Ianthe watched
Admiringly, the chisel's dainty play
Soften the valley 'twixt the cheek and mouth,
Sweeten the laughter rippling thro' the lips,
And fine the chin to rarer witchery.

They might have waited long, for he was lost
In Aphrodite's laugh and loveliness,
As they were well-nigh lost regarding him.
But prudently the Mother curbed her joy
At her son's handcraft ; and solicitous
That her main errand proved not profitless,
Signed to Ianthe, who poured out the wine,
And asked,

Will you drink wine, my Lord ?

He turned,
Gazing as one awakened from a dream,
Eyes on the maiden fixed. Descending, then
He to his Mother bending reverently,
Kissed her loved hands.

Ianthe, drink will I
Without libation would I drain a cup
That should Silenus shame commanded by
One so imperiously meek ! But now
You looked as a great Hebe meet to fill
His goblet for high Zeus sitting enthroned

Moved in the pure white blossom of her cheeks
A tinge of rose : taking the cup she placed
It down ; then brought him bread and fruit.

He cried,

O mother, give me your assent and I
Will carve Ianthe as she stood erewhile
Pouring the wine, a Hebe, child of Zeus
And Hera, pouring nectar for the God !
In her deep eyes there shone an upward awe
As though she gazed at Zeus gazing at her.

* * * * *

Now daily came Ianthe to repeat
The posture for Pygmalion which he chose
For youthful Hebe when she filled the cup
Of Zeus. Hard was the Maiden's task, for she
Flinched not at tingling nerves and throbbing pulse
Tho' dizzy oft from the continual strain
Of keeping motionless. He, all absorbed,
Regarded her but as a beauteous shape
Aiding him in the Godlike counterfeit,
Unconscious what she felt. Amazed each day
By fresh perfections dawning, he, each day,
More resolutely toil'd. The gracefulness
And pride of her long rounded throat, his hands
Changed into awkwardness by mimicry.
The arches of her shoulders ! Could he touch
On curves so exquisitely drooped, their sheen
Of movement tremulous ! In despair he sighed,
Avowing it impossible for hand
To trace the lines in full variety
Throughout the space of that majestic breast ;
Of dignity so peerless that if clad
In the great Virgin's golden armour scales
They would but seem a suitable defence.

Ianthe, calmly perfect, stood complete
In youthful strength, whose easy negligence
Of varying grace baffled the captive sight
To trace her beauties thro' the play and flush
Of bounding health exulting in its home !

Though uncomplainingly she bore the strain
Pleased was Ianthe when a slanting ray
Brightening Prometheus as he lay enchained
Proclaimed the noon.

One day on going back
Caught was she half-way in the curving path,
By gust so boisterous she needs must stop,
And battling with her fluttering folds, was blown
Half round, and chancing saw Pygmalion stand
Within the doorway shade regarding her.

Delightfulness ran trembling through her limbs.
An unfamiliar music beat her heart !
She moved without her feet.

Metharme cried
Cheeks apple-blossoms ; and how rough your hair,
Ianthe !

Yes, the wind against me beat
So forcibly I scarce could make my way.

We saw the struggling. Well knew Boreas
The sweetness of a wrestle with the charms
Of one so well endowed. Your garments he
Plucked at so wildly I began to dread
We might become like old Tiresias
When great Athena bathed !

Metharme, hush :
Pray, hush ! The Matron urged ; seeing how prompt
Her Maidens titter at the quaint conceit,

Ianthe robbed and vanquished to her own
White beauty bare, in native comeliness.

Ianthe spoke not but the blush remained.

Doves softly cooing murmurs musical
Gladdened unseen the darksome cloud of pines :
Below bright-hued innumerable wings
Carried love messages from flower to flower.
For Spring's outstretching fingers nearly touched
The Summer's welcoming hands. Pygmalion's work
On Hebe's statue now was nearly done ;
Tho' yet her features lacked that splendid gaze
Of worship which Pygmalion saw, or thought
He once saw in Ianthe's face, and fired
The passionate belief he could present
Immortal Hebe pouring for the God.

While looking on Ianthe's comely sway
Of body, and her shapely limbs, oft-times
His spirit sickened hopelessly.

The way
Her large and dainty fingers held the cup
Would make the taste of nectar more divine.
The arched perfection of her supple feet
Might stay the flight of Hermes to be kissed !
These seemed to him as unattainable
As flight of lark singing in deepest blue
To creeping unwinged things. But now, alas !
He could not through her features penetrate
And find the glory which he knew must dwell
In Hebe's brow.

Perfect was her face.
From dark gray eyes of dawn the gazer's sight
Would tenderly on her pure forehead rest.
Her nostrils breathed a purer air than Earth's ;

And the clear curves that marked her drooping mouth
Would seem of discontent, save for the two
Full roses midway kissing. Half distraught,
Remembering how, as from a mystic dream,
He woke and saw lanthe, as she stood
Holding the wine, believed the splendid gaze
He saw, a remnant of his dream, and not
Lanthe's own, as he thought heretofore.

Awhile at this perplexed, a tremor crept
Upon him, for he feared that never more
That gaze, as at a God, should he behold;
And mayhap, the bright touch of life divine
Be wanting to his Hebe.

Therefore he,
Having the Maiden's features fashioned true,
Used them no more : but down the inmost depths
His memory could sound sought the lost light
To quicken Hebe's eyes, as though she gazed
At Zeus upon his throne gazing on her.

Now that lanthe was no longer there
A part of daily labour, sometimes came
The sense of want, or loss, as if the day
Were chill with clouds. The habit had so grown
Of looking to her form for guidance sure,
Often he found himself at gaze upon
The empty platform where she sometime stood
Earnestly bent on giving him all aid.
And when at noon lanthe came, the clouds
Vanished to nothing in the golden prime.

TIRESIAS.

1886.

THOMAS WOOLNER.

I.—PALLAS ATHENA.

(FROM BOOK I.)

HALF the day long had I been in pursuit
Of one wide-antlered stag, that oftentimes
Passed me within an easy range, or stood
Proudly at gaze, prick-eared, snuffing the wind.
Oft raised my bended bow; but ere I drew
The arrow backward to its biting point,
I paused for pity, as the creature bent
His clear full gaze on mine : and even he
Within these lapses turned from me and fled.
At length this faltering in my hunter craft
So shamed my practice I unstrung my bow
And thought of home ; but first the Fates decreed
My feet to wander into ways obscure ;
Between gaunt rocks, and overshadowing trees
Whose twisting rootage gripped the rocks like prey ;
By shrubs whose shrewd incline seemed questioning;
Where rills thro' clefts came spurting in disdain
Then vanished haughtily amid the flowers
That peered with saucy looks or sidewise smile ;
All seeming aliens in my native land,
And I intrusive on their privacy ;
While thro' the silence of the steadfast woods,
Afar-off, sad, one solitary croak
Was answered by another more remote.

What meant this daylight mystery, and murk
Of cloying, dull stagnation in my blood ?

Had I given chase to hart of Artemis,
And angering Her, the Huntress keen, been smit
With life-long tremor for unconscious crime ?
A grim high-shouldered boar of shining tusks,
And graceful fir-tree, young, with slender shoots,
Must straightway be my offering at her shrine,
While, contrite, meekly I beseech Her grace !

This reverent spirit, Mother, nerved my strength
Like breezes from the sea, and bore me on
Where lay the land, whose favouring bosom beat
All tremulous, there welcoming with smiles
To her embrace the ardent gazing sun ;
And, looking back, I saw the woodland wane
To blank, and vanish into mist away.

In newborn exaltation, as tho' wings
Lifting my brows had raised me from myself,
I came to where a yawning ridged ravine,
Rill-streaked, and breathing vapour, closed in gloom.
Adown this ridged descent I leapt my way,
Certain of footfall, lightly as a bird,
Thro' tangled bushes thrall'd in eglantine
I strove unbaffled, where a vale of grass,
Quivering in flower and parted by a stream,
That bore the sunshine on its winding way,
With sudden beauty held me motionless.

Why went I not a down-stream wanderer,
Pacing in measure to the river-song ?

Fate, with resistless hand then clasping mine,
Enticed me upward, and ordained that I
Never again might wander with the flow !

On in pleased conflict with the thronging flowers,
Taking their golden tribute as I went ;
Across fresh rillets innocently clear ;
Grass, laced with thyme and smiles of gold and blue,
To where I saw a rocky headland cleave
The river's margin and oppose advance.
Abruptly rose its smouldering naked flank,
And reached a forest where Titanic growth
Lay mixed in darkness with a world of cloud,
That eagles haunted circling till they poised,
And quitted not their station in the sky.

My heart as though unleashed, sprang in my breast
And checked my breath "For there great Zeus," I
knew,

"Or Pallas, His great daughter, was below,
Their eagles watching Them !"

Audaciously

Skirting the rock, I trod a crescent lawn
Of brilliant emerald, screened by shadowy trees ;
Then, while in marvel why so quenched and lone
I shrank in precincts of Elysian calm,
I heard a wondrous splash, as though some wing
Had struck the water with a sudden beat.
Awe-smitten, kneeling in bewildered fear,
I felt the presence of a God.

Lo, high,

Leaning against an oak, Athena's spear
Pulsed fiercely edge and point ! The golden scales
That guard Her breast, a shimmering net of flame
Lay with her garment by the Gorgon shield,
Its visage turned in mercy toward the tree.
But how to tell of great Athena's Self,
When she in overwhelming stately power,
With light inscrutable, before me shone !

Resplendent from the water, on the grass,
Within a shower of trembling sparkles, She
Stood wringing out the river from Her hair.
Stretching Her hand to shake the drops away,
She showed the length, the strength, the rounded glow
Of beauty gleaming in Her mighty arm ;
And hallowed, twin in glory, proudly rose
Her sacred bosom lifted loftily.
While living radiance round Her presence clung
And moved in faithful concord as She turned
And bent Her gaze on mine. O not in scorn,
Approval, nor surprise, but as a star,
Serene, remote, and unapproachable,
Beams upon water troubled in the wind.
And I in worship strove to penetrate
Deep in the brightness of those azure heavens,
But felt their lustre pierce into my brain,
And I myself in darkness ; evermore
Closed from adventure in the world of men
Since that dark hour, I say it not in pride,
I have not tasted life nor known regret.

II.—THE LARK'S SONG.

(FROM BOOK I., PART II.)

“FAREWELL awhile, O earth, my gladness
Rising in delicious madness
 Tho' the sunshine deigns no pause
 Because
The wells of joy rise faster than my flight,
And overflow in sparkles of delight,
 Around the air
 And every where,
Till quivering downward tremblingly they fall
On gazing listeners, and their hearts enthrall.

"She watches me, my mate, admiring
While higher yet I soar untiring,
Till evanishing in day's

Bright rays,

She can but hear a rapturous voice she knows
Her praises tuning, and with praising grows

Prouder, and sings

The tender things

Of her first shyness, my approaches keen ;
She best loves hearing as I sing unseen.

"But love is lost in loftiest air,
The scenes of earth however fair !

Where, as often they distress

As bless.

I range the blue illimitable dome,

Smiling familiarity of home ;

Here I forget

The fowler's net,

And by immortal longing flushed, aspire

To ever mount, urged onward winged with fire !

"But no ; tho' very heaven is near,

Temptations of the earth are dear !

I must take the pleasant heed

To feed

The mouths agape so wide and frequently

With her cool sheltered under canopy

Of playful sheen

Where grasses lean

Over the little nest that rings her scope

Of happiness anear, and steadfast hope.

“ Now sing. I downward and behold
Her wings our callow young enfold ;
In suspense I poise above
My Love,
Her soft contented eye upon me fixt ;
As shaking trills of exultation mixt
With plainings lone
Of something gone,
I chant of glory that may never come ;
Or come when wings are closed and utterance dumb !

“ So peacefully she sits her nest,
Alighting would her calm molest ;
Therefore now again aloft,
Where oft
Have I beheld the sinking sun, I rise !
I bathe my being in these golden skies,
Where fire and gloom
Announce the doom
Of yet another day to sink in night,
Bequeathing traces of celestial light.

“ Now pallid gleams of twilight shrink
In dusk beyond the ocean's brink ;
And from the ocean gloom assails
The vales,
And lies a level bank on tended crops,
And masses mountains to their wooded tops.
So I will cease
And, deep in peace
Nestle beside my Love to rest, and dream
My flight to-morrow hails the morning beam ! ”

Mortimer Collins.

1827—1876.

MORTIMER COLLINS was born in Plymouth on the 29th of June, 1827—his father and mother being both natives of the west country. Francis Collins, the father, was a solicitor, and one is not surprised to learn that he was something of a mathematician and poet, for both these tendencies were developed in a high degree in his son. Mortimer was educated at Totteridge Park, Herts, and Westbury; and the only noteworthy fact of this part of his history is, that, before he left school, he had contributed verses to *Fraser* and *Punch*, and sundry articles to a local paper. This literary success fired him, on leaving school, to proceed to London and adopt journalism seriously as a profession; but, at the solicitation of his mother, he took the post of usher in a school. At the age of twenty-two he married the widow of the Rev. H. J. Crump, by whom he had one child, Mabel, who subsequently married Mr. Keningale Cook. Soon after his marriage Mortimer Collins was appointed mathematical master of Queen Elizabeth's College in Guernsey; and, though this employment must have engrossed much of his time, he still maintained a steady flow of contributions to various journals, and moreover produced his first book of verse—"Idyls and Rhymes" (1855). The next year, however, he left Guernsey

and the scholastic profession, and devoted himself thenceforth entirely to authorship; his second volume of verse, "Summer Songs," appearing in 1860. In 1867 his wife died; and in 1868 he married his second wife, Frances, who survived him for ten years—she herself dying in March 1886. In 1862 he had taken a remarkably pretty cottage at Knowl Hill, on the high road between Maidenhead and Reading; but he did not live regularly there until his second marriage, when he left London and settled down steadily—unfortunately too steadily—to work. He has sketched the cottage—and his life—in "A Poet's Philosophy," and a charming picture it is:—

"Some thirty miles from Megalopolis,
Miles also from the shrieking, griding rail,
On a high road where once the four-horse mail
Flashed gaily past—so placed my cottage is. . . ."

Having tried his hand at a novel ("Who is the Heir?"), which first appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine*, he turned out his second, "Sweet Anne Page," in 1868, and thirteen other novels followed in rapid succession until his death in 1876. In this time, also, he produced two volumes of verse—one of which "The British Birds" (1872), a quasi-paraphrase of "The Birds" of Aristophanes, contains some of his best and brightest work,—and the volume "The Secret of Long Life" (1872), a delightful, poetic (but unpractical) scheme of producing, or at least favouring, longevity; together with a mass of newspaper and magazine articles. He had, unfortunately, to work hard to live; and marvellously strong as his constitution must originally have been, it was unable to resist the strain of this constant work, unbroken by any holiday. He had suffered

from rheumatic fever with its usual damaging effect upon the heart ; and when, in July 1876, he went to Richmond to the house of his son-in-law, Kenningale Cook, hoping by a little change to remove the illness he felt, it was but to die on the second day after his arrival.

Mortimer Collins' misfortune was one common to many other brilliant men of letters ; he was not endowed with sufficient of this world's goods to provide him with bread and cheese while he used his brains on enduring work. Consequently, he had to be ever at work to support himself and his family ; with the result that much of his writing was more or less of an ephemeral character. He wrote readily and freely ; but, alas ! he would not polish or revise. Much of his best work is, therefore, marred by want of finish and condensation ; but undoubtedly many of his lyrics—for instance, "My Thrush," "Coming of Age," "A Greek Idyl"—are rarely excelled in their beauty.

MY THRUSH.

"All through the sultry hours of June,
From morning blithe to golden noon,
And till the star of evening climbs
The gray-blue East, a world too soon,
There sings a Thrush amid the limes.

"God's poet, hid in foliage green,
Sings endless songs, himself unseen ;
Right seldom come his silent times.
Linger, ye summer hours serene !
Sing on, dear Thrush, amid the limes.

"May I not dream God sends thee there,
Thou mellow angel of the air,
Even to rebuke my earthlier rhymes
With music's soul, all praise and prayer ?
Is that thy lesson in the limes ?

“Closer to God art thou than I :
His minstrel thou, whose brown wings fly
Through silent æther’s sunnier climes.
Ah, never may thy music die !
Sing on, dear Thrush, amid the limes !”

His novels are too romantic and wild to abide as works of Fiction ; he avowedly drew his characters, and invented his incidents, as he desired them to be, not as he supposed they were in real life. But his books are always worth reading, on account of the pleasant writing therein and the numerous lyrics which every now and then sparkle as gems in the mass. The best of them are, perhaps, “Sweet Anne Page,” “Frances,” and “Mr. Carington” ; but those who wish to have a knowledge of Collins’ light touch and literary fancy without reading these stories, cannot do better than peruse Frank Kerslake’s excellent little book “Attic Salt” (London, 1880), which is a collection of noteworthy extracts from all Collins’ works. In this connection may also be mentioned “Pen Sketches by a Vanished Hand” (1879), and “Thoughts in my Garden” (1880), both being composed of selections from his contributions to periodical literature. Apart from the novels, his most striking, complete prose work is the above-mentioned “Secret of Long Life” ; but even this must not be taken too seriously : a great part of it is only transcendental rhapsody. Mortimer Collins was apt to express himself strongly with regard to those who differed from him, and the way in which he lampooned Darwin, Tyndall, and Huxley on all occasions—particularly in “The British Birds”—is perhaps to be regretted, although it has been the cause of enriching the English language with some brilliant satirical verse. T. W. LITTLETON HAY.

SONGS AND SONNETS.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

I.—AD CHLOEN, M.A.

(FRESH FROM HER CAMBRIDGE EXAMINATION.)

LADY, very fair are you,
And your eyes are very blue,
And your hose ;
And your brow is like the snow,
And the various things you know
Goodness knows.

And the rose-flush on your cheek,
And your algebra and Greek
Perfect are ;
And that loving lustrous eye
Recognises in the sky
Every star.

You have pouting piquant lips,
You can doubtless an eclipse
Calculate ;
But for your cærulean hue,
I had certainly from you
Met my fate.

If by an arrangement dual
I were Adams mixed with Whewell,
Then some day
I, as wooer, perhaps might come
To so sweet an Artium
Magistra.

II.—TO F. C.

(20th February, 1875.)

FAST falls the snow, O lady mine,
Sprinkling the lawn with crystals fine,
But by the gods we won't repine
While we're together,
We'll chat and rhyme, and kiss and dine,
Defying weather.

So stir the fire and pour the wine,
And let those sea-green eyes divine
Pour their love-madness into mine :
I don't care whether
'Tis snow or sun or rain or shine
If we're together.

III.—A SUMMER SONG.

SUMMER is sweet, ay, summer is sweet—
Minna mine with the brown brown eyes :
Red are the roses under his feet,
Clear the blue of his windless skies.
Pleasant it is in a boat to glide
On a river whose ripples to ocean haste
With indolent fingers fretting the tide,
And an indolent arm round a darling waist—
And to see, as the western purple dies,
Hesper mirrored in brown brown eyes.

Summer is fleet, ah, summer is fleet—
Minna mine with the brown brown eyes :
Onward travel his flying feet,
And the mystical colours of autumn rise.
Clouds will gather round evening's star—
Sorrow may silence our first gay rhyme—

The river's swift ripples flow tardier far

Than the golden minutes of love's sweet time :
But to me, whom omnipotent love makes wise,
There's endless summer in brown brown eyes.

IV.—UNDER THE CLIFFS.

WHITE-THROATED Maiden, gay be thy carol
Under the cliffs by the sea ;
Plays the soft wind with thy dainty apparel—
Ah, but thou think'st not of me.
Stately and slow
The great ships go,
White gulls in the blue float free ;
And my own dear May
Sees the skies turn gray
Under the cliffs by the sea.

Ah, there is one who follows thee lonely
Under the cliffs by the sea :
Joy to this heart if thy watchet eyes only
Turn for a moment on me.
Strange is thy gaze
O'er the ocean's haze,
With those white hands claspt on thy knee :
Sweet breast, flutter high
For a true-love nigh
Under the cliffs by the sea !

When shall I dare love's story to utter
Under the cliffs by the sea ?
When shall I feel thy little heart flutter,
Press'd, O my darling, to me ?
Lo, the foam grows dark,
And the white-winged barque

Seems a speck in the mist to be :
 Ere the sun's rim dips
 Let me kiss those lips
 Under the cliffs by the sea !

V.—WINDS AND WOMEN.

“ . . . mulier cupido quod dicit amanti
 In vento et rapidâ scribere oportet aqua.”
 CATULLUS.

THE South wind blew, and its breath was a song
 As we loiter'd the shore along
 Under the light of the sun-kiss'd moon,
 Setting soon.

Whisper'd the ripples, murmur'd the leaves,
 Melody soft of the autumn eves ;
 But the song of the South came sweeter far
 Like a voice from Venus, evening star.

And I said, “ O women and winds, they change,
 And through every point of the compass range !
 Who cares for the daughter of Aquilo,
 Fast yet slow ?

With the eagle's scream and the eagle's beak,
 That's the woman of science, a creature unique.”
 My lady laugh'd, and her rosy mouth
 Seem'd to echo the song of the South.

“ Daughter of Eurus is still worse churl,
 With her stinging sneer at a prettier girl,
 With scandalous stories eager to blight
 Love's delight.

Never she'll tread Cythera's glade,
 But go to the devil a sour old maid.”
 Like the drip of a fountain crystal clear
 Was my lady's laugh at the words severe.

“ But the musical daughter of Auster sings
Melody sweeter than aught with wings ;
And thy nymph as a wooer comes to us,
Zephyrus !

The girl of the South is a fairy flower,
With a fragrance strange at the midnight hour ;
The girl of the West is a deep red rose,
On whose happy breast there is sweet repose.”

The moon was dipping. My lady laugh'd :

“ Little you know of a woman's craft.

I, to a bore or a canting priest,

Blow due East ;

I've a Northern chill for the fools who annoy,

And a Southern song for lovers of joy ;

And now I shift to the West, and woo

Somebody—somebody : you know who.”

VI.—*QUEEN AND SLAVE.*

O HAPPY life, whose love is found !
O happy love, whose life is free !
O happy strings whose soft notes sound
Athwart the sea !

The sea has mistress in the moon,

The moon has lover in the sea,—

They meet too late, they part too soon—

And so do we.

I am adored, yet must obey ;

I am a queen and yet a slave.

It seems to me the self-same way

With moon and wave.

O be it so ! O let it be !

O may I always rule and serve,
And live the life whose love is free,
And never swerve !

VII.—BRIDAL SONG.

THEY ride beneath the boughs at noon,
A lord and lady bright,
And laugh to hear the cuckoo's tune
And watch the swallow's flight,
And harken to the skylark's lay
Hid in the sky's blue light . . .
Ah, Love has laughter for the day,
And silence for the night.

The long, long day of pleasure past,
The banquet richly dight—
The lady's eyelids droop at last
O'er eyes of chrysolite :
The brilliant pageant fades away
In chambers hushed and white,
Since Love has laughter for the day
And silence for the night.

VIII.—A GREEK IDYL.

HE sat the quiet stream beside—
His white feet laving in the tide—
And watched the pleasant waters glide
Beneath the skies of summer.
She singing came from mound to mound,
Her footfall on the thymy ground
Unheard ; his tranquil haunt she found—
That beautiful new comer.

He said—"My own Glycerium !
 The pulses of the woods are dumb,
 How well I knew that thou would'st come,
 Beneath the branches gliding."
 The dreamer fancied he had heard
 Her footstep, whensoever stirred
 The summer wind, or languid bird
 Amid the boughs abiding.

She dipped her fingers in the brook,
 And gazed awhile with happy look
 Upon the windings of a book
 Of Cyprian hymnings tender.
 The ripples to the ocean raced—
 The flying minutes passed in haste :
 His arm was round the maiden's waist—
 That waist so very slender.

O cruel Time ! O tyrant Time !
 Whose winter all the streams of rhyme,
 The flowing waves of love sublime,
 In bitter passage freezes.
 I only see the scrambling goat,
 The lotus on the waters float,
 While an old shepherd with an oat
 Pipes to the autumn breezes.

IX.—THE IVORY GATE.

"Sunt geminae Somni portae : quarum altera fertur
 Cornea ; qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris :
 Altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto ;
 Sed falsa ad cœlum mittunt insomnia Manes."

VIRGIL.

WHEN, loved by poet and painter
 The sunrise fills the sky,
 When night's gold urns grow fainter,
 And in depths of amber die—

When the morn-breeze stirs the curtain,
Bearing an odorous freight—
Then visions strange, uncertain,
Pour thick through the Ivory Gate.

Then the oars of Ithaca dip so
Silently into the sea,
That they wake not sad Calypso—
And the Hero wanders free :
He breasts the ocean-furrows,
At war with the words of Fate—
And the blue tide's low susurrus
Comes up to the Ivory Gate.

Or, clad in the hide of leopard,
'Mid Ida's freshest dews,
Paris, the Teucrian shepherd,
His sweet C  none woos :
On the thought of her coming bridal
Unuttered joy doth wait—
While the tune of the false one's idyl
Rings soft through the Ivory Gate.

Or down from green Helvellyn
The roar of streams I hear,
And the lazy sail is swelling
To the winds of Windermere :
That girl with the rustic bodice
'Mid the ferry's laughing freight
Is as fair as any goddess
Who sweeps through the Ivory Gate.

Ah, the vision of dawn is leisure—
But the truth of day is toil :
And we pass from dreams of pleasure
To the world's unstayed turmoil.

Perchance, beyond the river
Which guards the realms of Fate,
Our spirits may dwell for ever
'Mong dreams of the Ivory Gate.

X.—MERLIN.

MERLIN, the great magician,
Quelled by a woman's hand,
Lies under the mighty oak-trees
In the forest of Broceliande.

The fever of life comes never
To fret his poet-brain :
He has slept a thousand years, and shall sleep
A thousand years again.

Dews fall soft on the turf there,
Young birds twitter above ;
Merlin sleeps, and surely sleep
Is better than aught save love.

Merlin sleeps, while the winters
Freeze, and the summers bloom,
And the old oaks whisper softly :
He is here till the Day of Doom.

O happy, happy Merlin,
Afar in the forest deep !
To thee alone of the sons of men
Gave a woman the gift of sleep.

XI.—COMING OF AGE.

THE poet may tread earth sadly,
Yet is he Dreamland's king,
And the fays at his bidding gladly
Visions of beauty bring ;

But his joys will be rarer, finer,
Away from this earthly stage,
When he, who is now a minor,
Comes of age.

For him soft leaflets cluster
Of violet, ivy, and vine ;
For him leaps livelier lustre
From purple depth of wine :
Pauses the song of the Sirens,
Closes the Sibyl's page,
Till he, whom earth environs,
Comes of age.

He is the true Anchises,
Well Aphrodite knows,
Who has smelt her hair's sweet spices,
And touched her bosom-snows :
Olympian food he once ate,
This marvellous Archimage
Who, 'mid the world's great sunset,
Comes of age.

He seems to the moiling million
A very pestilent knave ;
Yet the sky is his pavilion,
And the maiden moon his slave ;
And the sea, with its myriad laughter,
And maddening freaks of rage,
Owns him who, a king hereafter,
Comes of age.

The wailing winds and the thunder,
And the roar of a war that whirls,
Breaking great realms asunder,

And the merry songs of girls,
All in one music mingle,
All the great joys presage,
Of the poet who, royal and single,
Comes of age.

Roll on, O tardy cycle,
Whose death is the poet's birth !
Blow soon, great trump of Michael,
Shatter the crust of earth !
Let the slow spheres turn faster ;
Hasten the heritage
Of him who, as life's true master,
Comes of age !

XII.—ANTIQUITY.

THE eagle said, " I am old " ;
Said the tomtit, " I'm older than you "—
A ball of green and gold,
That had counted summers two.

And the jackdaw said, from his perch,
A pulpit of gray old stone,
" 'Twas I first founded the Church :
Leave questions of age alone."

And the raven came with a croak,
A mixture of humour and woe,
And claimed the Druid's oak
And the magical mistletoe.

But the eagle, far withdrawn,
Remembered old royal words,
When on Eden's sun-touched lawn
God said, " Let us make the birds."

And away into ether rare,
 And close to the sun's fierce gold,
 Rose the king of the kings of the air
 Crying, "Ay, I am young ! I am old."

XIII.—THE POSITIVISTS.

(FROM "THE BRITISH BIRDS.")

LIFE and the Universe show Spontaneity ;
 Down with ridiculous notions of Deity !
 Churches and creeds are all lost in the mists ;
 Truth must be sought with the Positivists.

Wise are their teachers beyond all comparison,
 Comte, Huxley, Tyndall, Mill, Morley, and Harrison ;
 Who will adventure to enter the lists,
 With such a squadron of Positivists ?

Social arrangements are awful miscarriages ;
 Cause of all crime is our system of marriages ;
 Poets with sonnets, and lovers with trysts,
 Kindle the ire of the Positivists.

Husbands and wives should be all one community,
 Exquisite freedom with absolute unity ;
 Wedding rings worse are than manacled wrists,—
 Such is the creed of the Positivists.

There was an APE in the days that were earlier ;
 Centuries past and his hair became curlier ;
 Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist,—
 Then he was MAN,—and a Positivist.

If you are pious, (mild form of insanity),
 Bow down and worship the mass of humanity.
 Other religions are buried in mists ;
 We're our own gods, say the Positivists.

Robert Brough.

1828—1860.

ROBERT BARNABAS BROUGH was one of a family which has attained distinction through several of its members. His father was a man of broad and liberal views, engaged in business in Wales, afterwards in Liverpool, and in London. His mother, who wrote under her maiden name, Frances Whiteside, was the author of a blank verse poem, "Karl the Martyr," which gained great popularity as a recitation. His elder brother William, with whom he afterwards collaborated, preceded him to London and pursued a literary career, Robert soon following him and excelling him as a writer of burlesques and extravaganzas produced by Robson at the Olympic, and by other managers elsewhere. His younger brother Lionel and his daughter Fanny have both occupied prominent positions in the dramatic world for a number of years; and he, Robert Brough, as journalist, playwright, and poet, filled no insignificant part in his day, and produced, together with much that was of ephemeral interest, some work which entitles him to remembrance.

Passing by his contributions to the burlesque drama, and what is known as comic journalism, with an expression of regret that one so capable of producing permanent work should have been compelled as he would "please to live" to "live

to please," we find no great body of poetic work to engage our attention, though that which remains is characteristic, and full of interest. His first serious effort was an attempt to reproduce the songs of Beranger in English verse, an attempt attended with considerable success, the results of which were published in 1856, and dedicated to Dante Rossetti. For the rest, his "*Songs of the Governing Classes*," published in 1855, a small volume of 120 pages, and a number of miscellaneous pieces reprinted from various serial publications under the title "*Miss Brown, a romance, and other tales in prose and verse*," seem to be all that reached the dignity of publication in volume form. Of these, the "*Songs of the Governing Classes*" are the most important. In his dedication of them to his friend Edward M. Whitty, the author of "*The Governing Classes of Great Britain*," a book that caused no little sensation in its time, Robert Brough says, "My modest song book, to your terrible story book, aspires to be no more than the fiddle that plays while the majestic panorama is unrolling; still, if the fiddle plays well, it may contribute its share to the general popularity of 'the entertainment.' Should a single one of my tunes arrive at the dignity of being whistled in the streets, I shall grudge neither resin nor elbow." Robert Brough was far too intensely genuine to devote himself exclusively to popular amusement, and some other vent than that afforded by the lighter occupations of his pen was necessary for the reserve force of keen satire, subtle and piquant humour, and passionate earnestness in his nature. His hatred of shams, his detestation of political self-seeking, his scorn

of hereditary claims to govern or to oppress mankind, his loathing of the imperial assumption which overrides, and still more of the debasing ambition which truckles to the desire of the people, only for the purpose of gaining increased wealth and power, and of stifling aspirations after true liberty, were deep and constant. Still, he knew the limitations of his own power to help the cause. In a characteristic preface, to the "Songs of the Governing Classes," he says, that having been told that "being only known (where at all) as a 'profane jester and satirist' (a quotation which he makes from Mr. Ruskin, of *Salvator Rosa*) the public will refuse to take me *au sérieux*, and that what is at all events an attempted expression of earnest convictions, will stand a risk of being passed by as a collection of ephemeral squibs, written in a spirit of the utmost tomfoolery. . . . I have certainly made jokes for a livelihood, just as I should have made boots, if I had been brought up to the business (believing that there is no harm or disgrace in either calling, as long as nobody's corns are unfairly pinched) but I do not see that I am thereby disqualified from giving serious utterance to my feelings, on vital questions, affecting me as well as my neighbours. The honest mountebank, with his paint washed off, and scedy surtout buttoned over his spangles—reduced, in fact, to the level of a mere anxious-faced ratepayer—has surely as much right to raise his voice at a public meeting as his fellow-sufferer the shoemaker."

Under the general title of "Songs of the Governing Classes," the contents of this little book of 120 pages are classified as "Portraits," "Historic Fancies," and "Miscellanies." Of the "Portraits," "The Marquis

of Carabas," and "My Lord Tomnoddy," are given in the following pages, and will speak for themselves, as will also "Godiva," selected from the "Historic Fancies." Of the "Miscellanies," "The Rats and the Terriers," a fable, is the best, with its characteristic concluding verse, illustrative of the best way of dealing with the leader of an opposition when he gets strong enough to be troublesome :—

" We beckon out the biggest rat,
And ask him with a friendly pat,
To join our side—the merrier—
We teach him how to bark ; with shears,
We dock his tail, and trim his ears,
Give him some bones to calm his fears
And tell him he's a Terrier !"

"The other tales in prose and verse," of the volume containing "Miss Brown, a romance," include "Dr. Johnson, a fairy tale," a characteristic poem, but too long for reproduction here, besides several imitations of Alfred de Musset, Berger, and Victor Hugo ; also "The Tent-maker's Story," a variation on Boccaccio, a fine poem in which the poet's scorn of human pride finds expression in the following characteristic lines :—

"Of all the lunacies earth can boast,
The one that must please the devils the most
Is pride reduced to the whimsical terms
Of causing the slugs to despise the worms."

Robert Brough was born April 10th, 1828, and died July 26th, 1860.

THOMAS ARCHER.

SONGS OF THE GOVERNING CLASSES.

1855.

ROBERT BROUGH.

I.—THE MARQUIS OF CARABAS.

(A SONG WITH A STOLEN BURDEN.)¹

OFF with your hat ! along the streets
His Lordship's carriage rolls ;
Respect to greatness—when it shines
To cheer our darken'd souls.
Get off the step, you ragged boys !
Policeman, where's your staff ?
This is a sight to check with awe
The most irrev'rent laugh.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

Stand further back ! we'll see him well ;
Wait till they lift him out :
It takes some time ; his Lordship's old,
And suffers from the gout.
Now look ! he owns a castled park
For ev'ry finger thin ;
He has more sterling pounds a-day
Than wrinkles on his skin.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

¹ The *refrain* of one of Beranger's most popular and (in every sense of the word) stirring lyrics of the Restoration. Beyond this the two songs have nothing in common, with the possible exception of sincerity.

The founder of his race was son
To a king's cousin, rich ;
(The mother was an oyster wench—
She perish'd in a ditch).
His patriot worth, embalm'd has been
In poets' loud applause :
He made twelve thousand pounds a-year
By aiding France's cause.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

The second marquis, of the stole
Was groom to th' second James ;
He all but caught that recreant king
When flying o'er the Thames.
Devotion rare ! by Orange Will
With a Scotch county paid ;
He gain'd one more—in Ireland—when
Charles Edward he betray'd.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

He liv'd to see his son grow up
A gen'ral famed and bold,
Who fought his country's fights—and *one*,
For half a million, sold.
His son (alas ! the house's shame)
Fritter'd the name away :
Diced, wench'd, and drank—at last got shot,
Through cheating in his play !

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

Now, see, where, focus'd on one head,
 The race's glories shine :
 The head gets narrow at the top,
 But mark the jaw—how fine !
 Don't call it satyr-like ; you'd wound
 Some scores, whose honest pates,
 The selfsame type present, upon
 The Carabas estates !

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

Look at his skin—at four-score years
 How fresh it gleams, and fair :
 He never tasted ill-dressed food,
 Or breath'd in tainted air.
 The noble blood glows through his veins
 Still, with a healthful pink ;
 His brow scarce wrinkled !—Brows keep so
 That have not got to think.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

His hand's unglov'd !—it shakes, 'tis true,
 But mark its tiny size,
 (High birth's true sign) and shape, as on
 The lackey's arm it lies.
 That hand ne'er penn'd a useful line,
 Ne'er work'd a deed of fame,
 Save slaying one, whose sister he—
 Its owner—brought to shame.

Chapeau bas !

Chapeau bas !

Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

They've got him in—he's gone to vote
Your rights and mine away ;
Perchance our lives, should men be scarce,
To fight his cause for pay.
We are his slaves ! he owns our lands,
Our woods, our seas, and skies ;
He'd have us shot like vicious dogs,
Should we in murm'ring rise !
Chapeau bas !
Chapeau bas !
Gloire au Marquis de Carabas !

II.—MY LORD TOMNODDY.

MY Lord Tomnoddy's the son of an Earl,
His hair is straight, but his whiskers curl ;
His Lordship's forehead is far from wide,
But there's plenty of room for the brains inside.
He writes his name with indifferent ease,
He's rather uncertain about the "d's,"—
But what does it matter, if three or one,
To the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son ?

My Lord Tomnoddy to college went,
Much time he lost, much money he spent ;
Rules, and windows, and heads, he broke—
Authorities wink'd—young men will joke !
He never peep'd inside of a book—
In two years' time a degree he took ;
And the newspapers vaunted the honours won
By the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son.

My Lord Tomnoddy came out in the world,
Waists were tightened, and ringlets curl'd.

Virgins languish'd, and matrons smil'd—
'Tis true, his Lordship is rather wild ;
In very queer places he spends his life ;
There's talk of some children, by nobody's wife—
But we mustn't look close into what is done
By the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son.

My Lord Tomnoddy must settle down—
There's a vacant seat in the family town !
('Tis time he should sow his eccentric oats)—
He hasn't the wit to apply for votes :
He cannot e'en learn his election speech,
Three phrases he speaks—a mistake in each !
And then breaks down—but the borough is won
For the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son.

My Lord Tomnoddy prefers the Guards,
(The House is a bore) so !—it's on the cards !
My Lord's a Lieutenant at twenty-three,
A Captain at twenty-six is he—
He never drew sword, except on drill ;
The tricks of parade he has learnt but ill—
A full-blown Colonel at thirty-one
Is the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son !

My Lord Tomnoddy is thirty-four ;
The Earl can last but a few years more.
My Lord in the Peers will take his place :
Her Majesty's councils his words will grace.
Office he'll hold, and patronage sway ;
Fortunes and lives he will vote away—
And what are his qualifications ?—ONE !
He's the Earl of Fitzdotterel's eldest son

III.—GODIVA.

GODIVA! not for countless tomes
Of war's and kingcraft's leaden hist'ry,
Would I thy charming legend lose,
Or view it in the bloodless hues
Of fabled myth or myst'ry.

Thou tiny pearl of Demagogues!
Thou blue-eyed rebel—blushing traitor!
Thou *Sans-culotte*, with dimpled toes,
Whose Red cap is an op'ning rose—
Thou trembling agitator!

We must believe in thee! Our ranks
Of champions loom with faces grimy,—
Fierce Tylers, from the anvil torn,
Rough-chested Tells with palms of horn—
Foul Cades, from ditches slimy!

Knit brows, fierce eyes, and sunken cheeks,
Fill up the vista stern and shady;
Our one bright speck, we cannot spare,
Our reg'ment's sole Vivandière—
Our little dainty lady!

No, she was true! the story old,
As any crumbling, Saxon castle,
Firm at its base: she liv'd, and mov'd,
And breath'd, and all around her, lov'd—
Lord, lackey, hound and vassal!

She lov'd Earl Leofric, her lord,
Nor car'd with his fierce moods to wrestle,
By protest more than eyelids red;
Would he but pat her golden head,
'Twould in his rude breast nestle.

She lov'd the palfrey, o'er the plain
That gallop'd to her voice's chirrup ;
His surly grooms she thought were kind,
Noble and true, she deem'd the hind,
Who, cringing, held her stirrup.

The peacocks on the lawn she lov'd—
But none the less their homely gray mates.
The kennel yelp'd as near she drew ;
A crippled, ugly cur or two,
Were her especial playmates.

She lov'd all things beneath the sun.
Into the toad's bright eyes, unstartled,
She laughing gazed : within the brake,
She'd wonder—"had she hurt the snake,
That out upon her dartled ?"

Into the peasant's tree-built hut,
With reeking walls and greasy tables,
She lov'd to run for draughts of milk—
The children maul'd her robe of silk,
And pull'd to bits her sables.

They made her sad ! she lov'd them all—
Each lout, a friend—each drab, a sister—
Why praise her beauty—goodness, so ?
Why, when she left them, bow so low ?
None of them ever kiss'd her !

Within the town, 'twas worse than all,
Where anvil clank'd, and furnace rumbled ;
There workmen, starv'd and trampled, met,
Thought, talk'd, and plann'd—a churlish set,
Embitter'd—no whit humbled.

They rail'd at her—their tyrant's bride,
When, like a mouse, she peep'd among them;
They met her frighten'd smiles with "Go!"
Her bungling proffered love with "No!"
What had she done to wrong them?

For wrong'd they were, she felt it sore—
Else, whence such faces wan and gloomy?
In smoke, and filth, and discontent,
Why thousands, thus in alleys pent,
And earth so rich and roomy?

She could not tell! But she would give
Her soul, the people's wrongs to lighten;
Or, if she might not—in their smoke
Would they but let her with them choke,
Nor off, with rude words frighten!

What could she do? Dark rumours came
That 'twas the Earl, her lord and master,
Caused all their wrong. Alas, the day!
She lov'd him, too—what means essay
The double-fold disaster,

To turn aside? The moment came—
The town new tax'd, moan'd fierce and sadly:
"How free them from this tax?" said she.
"*Ride naked through the town,*" laugh'd he.
"I will," she answered, "gladly."

And gladly to her bow'r she fled,
This more than virgin, gaily singing;
And stripp'd a form, that morn had blush'd
All over, by a rude fly brush'd,
Her garden-bath o'erwinging!

And gladly on her palfrey sprung,
That quick the echoing stones awakéd.
"They will be freed!" she sang, "and he
Shall know no harm!"—rose-red, went she,
That she was proud—not naked!

She gallop'd through the glaring street—
'Tis true as written gospel holy.
'Tis also true, thank God! that all
The meanest mean—the smallest small—
The vilest of the lowly,

Kept within doors, with windows barr'd,
And pray'd for her with tears and fasting,
Nor on the flying vision bright
Gaz'd, (though a glimpse of heav'n, that might
For torments everlasting,

Nigh compensate)—save one alone—
And here, I own, my faith gets weaker:
'Tis said, a rascal, from behind
A shutter peep'd, and God struck blind
The soulless, prying sneaker.

I would not have a miracle
Bring doubt upon my darling's story;
God does not thus avenge the true,
But leaves their wrongs to me and you,
To right them in their glory.

Punish'd the miscreant was, no doubt,
Indignantly with pump and gutter;
But he who, of enslav'd mankind,
The martyr pure, could mock—was blind,
Ere he undid the shutter!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

ROBERT BROUGH.

I.—NEIGHBOUR NELLY.

I 'M in love with neighbour Nelly,
Though I know she's only ten,
While, alas ! I'm eight-and-forty—
And the *marriedst* of men !
I've a wife who weighs me double,
I've three daughters all with *beaux* :
I've a son with noble whiskers,
Who at me turns up his nose.

Though a square-toes, and a fogey,
Still I've sunshine in my heart :
Still I'm fond of cakes and marbles,
Can appreciate a tart.
I can love my neighbour Nelly
Just as though I were a boy,
I could hand her nuts and apples
From my depths of corduroy.

She is tall and growing taller,
She is vigorous of limb :
(You should see her play at cricket
With her little brother Jim.)
She has eyes as blue as damsons,
She has pounds of auburn curls ;
She regrets the game of leapfrog
Is prohibited to girls.

I adore my neighbour Nelly,
I invite her in to tea :
And I let her nurse the baby—
All her pretty ways to see.
Such a darling bud of woman,
Yet remote from any teens—
I have learnt from neighbour Nelly
What the girl's doll-instinct means.

Oh, to see her with the baby !
He adores her more than I,—
How she choruses his crowing,—
How she hushes every cry !
How she loves to pit his dimples
With her light forefinger deep,
How she boasts to me in triumph
When she's got him off to sleep !

We must part, my neighbour Nelly,
For the summers quickly flee ;
And your middle-aged admirer
Must supplanted quickly be.
Yet as jealous as a mother,—
A distempered, cankered churl,
I look vainly for the setting
To be worthy such a pearl.

II.—AN EARLY CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIANS were on the earth ere Christ was
born ;

His laws, not yet a code, were followed still,
By sightless pagans, in the dark forlorn,
Groping towards the light, as blind men will :
Thousands of years ago men dared to die
Loving their enemies—and wondered why !

Who that has read in Homer's truthful page,
Of brave Achilles, brooding o'er the corse
Of Hector sacrificed (less to his rage,
Than iron custom's law, without remorse,
Claiming revenge for mild Patroclus slain!)
Can doubt he wished great Hector lived again?

Full half the tears he shed were Hector's due,
Whose noble soul he had to Hades sent—
Why? was Patroclus gainer? If they knew!
Methinks I see Achilles in his tent,
Beating his breast, and twitching at his hair,
Wanting a few words only—the Lord's Prayer!

And more for his, than Priam's sake, I feel
Rejoiced when I am told the good old man
Comes with his simple, fatherly appeal
For Hector's body:—pointing out a plan
Of kindness, atonement, and of peace,
That in Achilles' breast Hate's strife may cease.

What joy he must have felt to see a way
To turn him from Revenge's irksome path;
Like a worn seaman who descries the day,
After a night-watch mid the tempest's wrath.
Methinks I see him, in his huge arms bear,
Great Hector's body, with admiring care;

And chuckling to evade the sentries dull,
Convey it through the sleeping camp with glee;
With sense of lightness new and wonderful,
To grateful Priam's ear. "What can it be?"
I hear him ask, "thus makes my bosom glow,
Showing such weakness to a fallen foe?"

Gerald Massey.

1828.

GERALD MASSEY was born at a wharf, near Tring, in Hertfordshire, on the 29th of May, 1828. At eight years of age he began working at a silk factory, serving twelve hours a day for wages varying from ninepence to eighteenpence per week. Later he spent several years at straw plaiting—years of great poverty, hardship, and suffering. His education was necessarily of the scantiest description, and his access to books very limited. But he had a vigorous mind, a courageous heart, and a determined will, which, associated with a warm sympathy with mankind, soon led him into print. At twenty-one years of age he was editing a paper called *The Spirit of Freedom*, and at twenty-two he became one of the secretaries of the "Christian Socialists," and a personal friend of Frederick Denison Maurice and Charles Kingsley. In 1850 he published his first volume of poems entitled "Voices of Freedom and Lyrics of Love." This was followed, in 1854, by "The Ballad of Babe Christabel and Other Poems," which called forth appreciative reviews in many quarters, and gained for him recognition as a new *national* poet. Among those who were attracted to him at this time were Hepworth Dixon, Walter Savage Landor, and George Eliot, the last of whom made him the model for the character of "Felix Holt the

Radical." In 1855 he published "War Waits," a volume fired by the Crimean War ; followed in 1860 by "Havelock's March," and in 1869 by "A Tale of Eternity and Other Poems."

Before this, however, the poet had begun to turn his attention to other subjects. The burden of the prophet was upon him, and the "insuperable difficulty of living by the poetry that one would gladly have lived for," as he pathetically puts it, was with him, and the result was the devotion of the remainder of his life to literary investigation, and psychological inquiry. To this we owe "The Secret Drama of Shakespeare's Sonnets" (1864-72), a volume "Concerning Spiritualism" (1872) now withdrawn, "A Book of the Beginnings" (1882), and the "Natural Genesis" (1884).

In the year 1890, more than twenty years after the publication of his previous book of poems, "The Tale of Eternity," the poet, or rather his daughter, arranged in two volumes a collection of his poems, old and new, which he published under the title of "My Lyrical Life." These two volumes contain all that was worthiest of the former four, together with some hundred pages of hitherto unpublished verse, and upon the contents of these volumes Gerald Massey's fame as a poet will rest. How rich these contents are, and how sure the fame may be, space does not avail either to prove or illustrate. Though, as the poet himself points out, his lyrical life covers only half of his literary career, the harvest is both wealthy and abundant ; and while we heartily sympathise with Mr. A. B. Grosart, the editor of "Old English Poets," in the passionate appeal he made to the poet

many years ago not to forsake his first love, we have not the heart to be too severe upon him for his neglect of the Lyre, albeit we have probably lost so much, and although it must be admitted that the beauty and sweetness of his early songs are powerful arguments against him. "My Lyrical Life," says the poet, "may contain the flower; but the fruit of my whole life has to be looked for elsewhere." It is, however, with the flower that we have to do; and so, without regarding the fruit either as "sour grapes" or "apples of Sodom," we will leave the orchard and rejoice in the fragrance and beauty of the poet's garden.

Gerald Massey is one of the most truly national of our English poets. His verse gives vigorous expression to the thoughts, feelings, emotions, and aspirations common to English hearts, and forcible representation to distinctive traits of the national character. Others of his contemporaries have been poets of Love or War, poets of the Heroism of old, poets of Domestic Life, or of Political Progress; but Gerald Massey has treated all these subjects not only with a true and firm hand, but with a consistent unity of conception and purpose, and in a thoroughly national spirit. Like the Norseman of whom he sings, he is everywhere true, brave, generous, and free. He is before all things a patriot. He has an intense belief in the genius of England as the champion of liberty, and the pioneer of freedom. He glories alike in her old-time history and in her perennial potentiality:—

"Old England still throbs with the muffled fire
Of a past she can never forget,
And again shall she herald the world up higher,
For there's life in the old land yet."

There is no mistaking the old heroic spirit of his battle ballads. It is not a spirit that glories in fighting for fighting's sake, but one which regards freedom as of higher value than peace, and scorns the life that is purchased at the price of wrong. Here in his national and patriotic, as elsewhere in his domestic verse, he seems to touch the central feeling of the national heart. In his "Peace-at-any-price Men" he sings:—

"But we are Peacemen also; crying for
Peace, peace at any price—though it be war."

and surely this is a true expression of national feeling. Animated by such a spirit, it is not surprising that Gerald Massey should have been inspired to chronicle the most thrilling incidents of his early manhood; and it is hardly too much to say that, of all the verse fired by the Russian war, his forms, perhaps, the most compact and powerful body. The ballad of "Inkerman" has been called "the finest war-lyric ever produced"; and though this may be claiming too much, it is difficult to believe that any one could read the poems entitled "War Waits" without being thrilled with national ardour, or fired with patriotic pride. Gerald Massey's battle-brand was forged in the fires of War and beaten out glowing-hot from the stithy at the time:—

"I had a gallant Brother, loved at home, and dear to me—
I have a mourning Mother, winsome Wife, and Children
three —

He lies with Balaklava's dead: But let the Old Land call,
We would give our living remnant, we would follow one
and all."

Again, in the section of his poems entitled "The Sea-Kings," we find the spirit of the ancient scald animating the voice of the modern bard. What could be

better in their way than many of these ballads of the old sea fights? "The Old Man-o'-War's Man's Yarn," for instance, unfortunately, like "Inkerman," too long for quotation in this work:—what a happier illustration of the association of the old spirit with the common-sense acceptance of modern conditions than the following stanza from a "Sea Song" (p. 331)?—

"All Hands aboard! our country calls
On her seafaring folk!
In giving up our wooden walls,
More need for hearts of oak."

Thoroughly national in the spirit of his war songs, Gerald Massey is equally characteristically English in his treatment of the subject of Love. All through the "Love Lyrics," the "Carmina Nuptialia," "Wedded Love," the "Mother's Idol Broken," and the "Poems for Christie," there is the true, hearty English loyalty to the genius of domestic love, the loyalty of hearth and home, the loyalty of the inner kingdom which makes the outer kingdom strong. These lyrics are not the veneered and polished products of the carpenter and joiner school of poetry, they are living, loving entities with the heart's blood pulsing through them.

Again, in his poems of Civil life, we find leading English characteristics in the love of fair play, the sympathy with suffering, and the appreciation of honest pluck wherever shown. The poet has an intense belief in the people, an unfailing faith in the national spirit, and in the certainty, if not the imminence, of the good time coming:—

"Creeds, empires, systems rot with age,
But the great People's ever youthful;
And it shall write the future's page
To our humanity more truthful."

Robert Burns and Tom Hood, no less than Garibaldi and Kossuth, excite his enthusiasm and inspire his song. His "Cries of '48" are full of passionate declamation; but they are also full of good hope and sound teaching. What could be better in the way of a song for the people than the one commencing—

"There lives a voice within me, a guest-angel of my heart,
And its bird-like warbles win me till the tears a-tremble
start;

Up evermore it springeth, like some magic melody,
And evermore it singeth its sweet song of songs to me—
This world is full of beauty, as other worlds above,
And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love!"

In his treatment of Nature, too—though he only employs it as a background to humanity—Gerald Massey sees the English landscape with English eyes, and with English eyes wide open, the flowers not only with the dew upon them, but with the sun shining on the dew. His love of colour is everywhere shown; indeed, we had almost said that his poems suggest painting, but they do more than this, they reveal Nature. As a piece of Nature painting, take the following lines from "A Poet's Love-Letter":—

"And here's my Rest, where sheen and shadow meet
O'erhead, the small flowers budding at my feet;
Green picnic places peeping from the wood,
Where you may meet the spirit of Robin Hood
Crossing the moonlight at the old deer-chase;
A brooding Dove the Spirit of the place;
Gleams of the Graces at their bath of dew;
An earthly pleasaunce; heaven trembling through;
My Darling sitting with her hand in mine,
Here, where amid lush grass the large-eyed kine
Ruminant, stolid, stately behold
The milky plenty and the mellowing gold:
And with glad laugh the tiny buttercup

Its beaker of delight brimful holds up ;
 And prodigally glorified, the mead
 Is all aglow with red-ripe sorrel-seed,
 And quick with smells that make one long to be
 A-gathering sweets, bloom-buried utterly."

And yet, in other moods, Nature is full of sympathy for the poet, the flowers grow as with an earnest purpose, the gorse is as a bush afire with God. In "Via Crucis Via Lucis" he writes :—

"Nature at heart is very pitiful.
 How gentle is the hand doth kindly pull
 The coverlet of flowers o'er the face
 Of Death! and light up his dark dwelling-place!
 With fingers and with footfall soft and low
 She comes to make the quiet mosses grow :
 Safe-smiling, draws the snowdrop through the snow.
 Busy in sun and rain, she strives to heal,
 Doing her best to comfort and conceal :
 With tenderest grass makes green the saddest grave,
 And over death the flags of life *will* wave.
 She is the Angel, waiting by the prison,
 That saith, *He is not here, He is arisen.*"

The "Tale of Eternity" is a fine poem dealing with the problem of Sin, the relationship of soul and body, and the influence of the spiritual upon material life. It is full of poetic thought and spiritual suggestion. One or two brief quotations must suffice :—

"Both heaven and hell are from the human race,
 And every soul projects its future place ;
 Long shadows of ourselves are thrown before,
 To wait our coming on the Eternal shore.
 These either clothe us with eclipse and night
 Or as we enter them, are lost in light."

* * * * *

"No seed of life blown down a dark abysm
 Of earth or sea but feels the magnetism
 That draws us Godward! Flowers sunk in mines,
 Or plants in ocean, where no sunbeam shines,
 Will blindly climb up toward their Deity,
 Far off in Heaven, whom they can never see.

"There is a Spirit of Life within the Tree,
 That's fed and clothed from Heaven continually,
 And does not draw all nourishment from earth.
 It puts a myriad tender feelers forth,
 That breathe in heaven and turn the breath to sap :
 In every leaf it spreads a tiny lap
 To take its manna from the hand of God,
 And gather force for fingers 'neath the sod
 To clutch the earth with ; moulds, from sun and rain,
 Its leaves ; with spirit-life feeds every vein,
 And through each vein makes wood for bough and bark:
 Girth for the bole, and rootage down the dark.

"So Man is fed by God and lives in Him :
 Not merely nourished by his rootage dim
 In a far Past ; a dead world underground,
 But spirit to spirit reaches life all round.

* * * *

"Not in one primal Man before the Fall
 Did God set life a-breathing once for all,
 He is the breath of life from first to last ;
 He liveth in the Present as the Past.

* * * *

"God hath been gradually forming Man
 In His own image since the world began,
 And is for ever working on the soul,
 Like Sculptor on his Statue, till the whole
 Expression of the upward life be wrought
 Into some semblance of the Eternal Thought.
 Race after Race hath caught its likeness of
 The Maker as the eyes grew large with love."

In the following pages we have endeavoured to represent the poet in his variety, though we have given no selections from poems too long for quotation in their entirety. In the result we hope that we may have done something to interest a new generation in the poems of Gerald Massey, a born laureate of the people, and one of the most thoroughly English poets of the century.

ALFRED H. MILES.

BALLADS OF WAR.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE'S LAST FIGHT.

1859.

OUR second Richard Lion-Heart,
In days of great Queen Bess,
He did this deed, he played this part,
With true old nobleness ;
And wrath heroic that was nursed
To bear the fiercest battle-burst,
When maddened Foes should wreak their worst.

Signalled the English Admiral,
"Weigh or cut anchors." For
A Spanish fleet bore down, in all
The majesty of war,
Athwart our tack for many a mile,
As there we lay off Florez Isle,
With Crews half sick ; all tired of toil.

Eleven of our Twelve ships escaped ;
Sir Richard stood alone !
Though they were Thrice-and-Fifty sail—
A hundred men to one—
The old Sea-Rover would not run,
So long as he had man or gun ;
But he could die when all was done.

"The Devil's broken loose, my lads,
In shape of Popish Spain ;
And we must sink him in the sea,
Or hound him home again.
Now, you old War-Dogs, show your paws !
Have at them tooth and nail and claws !"
And then his long, bright blade he draws.

The deck was cleared ; the Boatswain blew ;
The grim Sea-Lions stand,
The death-fires lit in every eye,
The burning match in hand ;
With mail of glorious intent
All hearts were clad ; and in they went,
A force that cut through where 'twas sent.

“Push home, my hardy pikemen,
For we play a desperate part ;
To-day, my Gunners, let them feel
The pulse of England's heart !
They shall remember long that we
Once lived ; and think how shamefully
We shook them !—One to Fifty-three.”

With face of one who cheerily goes
To meet his doom that day,
Sir Richard sprang upon his foes ;
The foremost gave him way :
His round shot smashed them through and through,
At every flash white splinters flew :
And madder grew his fighting few.

They clasp the little Ship Revenge,
As in the arms of fire ;
They run aboard her, six at once ;
Hearts beat, hot guns leap higher.
Through gory gaps the boarders swarm,
But still our English stay the storm,
The bulwark in their breast is firm.

Ship after ship, like broken waves
That wash up on a rock,
Those mighty Galleons fall back foiled,
And shattered from the shock.
With fire she answers all their blows ;
Again, again in pieces strows
The girdle round her as they close.

Through all that night the great white storm
Of worlds in silence rolled ;
Sirius with green-azure sparkle,
Mars in ruddy gold :
Heaven looked with stillness terrible
Down on a fight most fierce and fell --
A sea transfigured into hell.

Some know not they are wounded till
'Tis slippery where they stand ;
Then each one tighter grips his steel
As 'twere Salvation's hand.
Grim faces glow through lurid night
With sweat of spirit shining bright :
Only the dead on deck turn white.

At daybreak the flame-picture fades
In blackness and in blood ;
There, after fifteen hours of fight,
The unconquered Sea-King stood
Defying all the powers of Spain :
Fifteen Armadas hurled in vain,
And fifteen hundred foemen slain.

About that little Bark Revenge,
The baffled Spaniards ride
At distance. Two of their good ships
Were sunken at her side ;
The rest lie round her in a ring,
As round the dying Lion-king,
The Dogs afraid of his death-spring.

Our pikes all broken, powder spent,
Sails, masts to shivers blown ;
And with her dead and wounded crew
The ship was going down !
Sir Richard's wounds were hot and deep.
Then cried he, with a proud, pale lip,
" Ho ! Master Gunner, sink the ship !

" Make ready now, my Mariners,
To go aloft with me,
That nothing to the Spaniard
May remain of victory,
They cannot take us, nor we yield ;
So let us leave our battle-field,
Under the shelter of God's shield."

They had not heart to dare fulfil
The stern Commander's word :
With swelling hearts, and welling eyes,
They carried him aboard
The Spaniard's ship ; and round him stand
The Warriors of his wasted band :
Then said he, feeling death at hand,

"Here die I, Richard Grenville,
With a joyful and quiet mind ;
I reach a Soldier's end, I leave
A Soldier's fame behind,
Who for his Queen and Country fought,
For Honour and Religion wrought,
And died as a true Soldier ought."

Earth never returned a worthier trust
For hand of Heaven to take,
Since Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Was east into the lake,
And the King's grievous wounds were dressed,
And healed, by weeping Queens, who blessed,
And bore him to a valley of rest.

Old Heroes who could grandly do,
As they could greatly dare ;
A vesture, very glorious,
Their shining spirits wear,
Of noble deeds ! God give us grace,
That we may see such face to face,
In our great day that comes apace.

II.—THE CAPTAIN OF THE "NORTHFLEET."

SO often is the proud deed done
By men like this at Duty's call ;
So many are the honours won
For us, we cannot wear them all !

They make the heroic common-place,
And dying thus the natural way ;

And yet, our world-wide English race
Feels nobler, for that death, To-day!

It stirs us with a sense of wings
That strive to lift the earthiest soul;
It brings the thoughts that fathom things
To anchor fast where billows roll.

Love was so new, and life so sweet,
But at the call he left the wine,
And sprang full-statured to his feet,
Responsive to the touch divine.

*"Nay, Dear, I cannot see you die.
For me, I have my work to do
Up here. Down to the boat. Good-bye,
God bless you. I shall see it through."*

We read, until the vision dims
And drowns; but, ere the pang be past,
A tide of triumph overbrims
And breaks with light from heaven at last.

Through all the blackness of that night
A glory streams from out the gloom;
His steadfast spirit lifts the light
That shines till Night is overcome.

The sea will do its worst, and life
Be sobbed out in a bubbling breath;
But firmly in the coward strife
There stands a man who has conquered Death!

A soul that masters wind and wave,
And towers above a sinking deck ;
A bridge across the gaping grave ;
A rainbow rising o'er the wreck.

Others he saved ; he saved the name
Unsullied that he gave his wife :
And dying with so pure an aim,
He had no need to save his life !

Lord, how they shame the life we live,
These Sailors of our sea-girt isle,
Who cheerily take what Thou mayst give,
And go down with a heavenward smile !

The men who sow their lives to yield
A glorious crop in lives to be :
Who turn to England's Harvest-field
The unfruitful furrows of the sea.

With such a breed of men so brave,
The Old Land has not had her day ;
But long, her strength, with crested wave,
Shall ride the Seas, the proud old way.

III.—ENGLAND GOES TO BATTLE.

NOW, glory to our England,
She arises, calm and grand,
The ancient spirit in her eyes,—
The good sword in her hand !
Our royal right on battle-ground
Was aye to bear the brunt :

Ho ! brave heart, with one passionate bound,
Take the old place in front !
Now, glory to our England,
As she rises, calm and grand,
The ancient spirit in her eyes,—
The good sword in her hand !

Who would not fight for England ?
Who would not fling a life
I' the ring, to meet a tyrant's gage,
And glory in the strife ?
Her stem is thorny, but doth burst
A glorious Rose a-top !
And shall our proud Rose wither ? First
We'll drain life's dearest drop !
Who would not fight for England ?
Who would not fling a life
I' the ring, to meet a tyrant's gage,
And glory in the strife ?

To battle goes our England,
As gallant and as gay
As lover to the altar, on
A merry marriage-day.
A weary night she stood to watch
The clouds of dawn up-rolled ;
And her young heroes strain to match
The valour of the old.
To battle goes our England,
As gallant and as gay
As lover to the altar, on
A merry marriage-day.

Now, fair befall our England,
On her proud and perilous road :
And woe and wail to those who make
Her footprints wet with blood.
Up with our red-cross banner—roll
A thunder-peal of drums !
Fight on there, every valiant soul
Have courage ! England comes !
Now, fair befall our England,
On her proud and perilous road :
And woe and wail to those who make
Her footprints wet with blood !

Now, victory to our England !
And where'er she lifts her hand
In Freedom's fight, to rescue Right,
God bless the dear Old Land !
And when the Storm hath passed away,
In glory and in calm,
May she sit down i' the green o' the day,
And sing her peaceful psalm !
Now, victory to our England !
And where'er she lifts her hand
In Freedom's fight, to rescue Right,
God bless the dear Old Land !

IV.—SEA SONG.

COME, show your colours, now, my Lads,
That all the world may know
The Boys are equal to their Dads,
Whatever blast may blow.

All hands aboard ! our Country calls
On her sea-faring folk !
In giving up our wooden walls
More need for hearts of oak.

Remember how that old-fire Drake
Would singe the Spaniard's beard ;
And think how Raleigh, Nelson, Blake,
Into their harbours steered.

Think how o' nights we cut them out !
'Twas many a time and oft—
Silence!—a rush—a tug—a shout—
And the old flag flew aloft.

Be it one to seven—be it Hell or Heaven,
We fought our decks red wet !
Be it Hell or Heaven, be it one to seven,
We fear no Foeman yet.

At every porthole there shall flame
The same fierce battle-face ;
All worthy of the old sea-fame,
All of the old sea race.

LOVE LYRICS.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—A MAIDEN'S SONG.

I LOVE! and Love hath given me
Sweet thoughts to God akin,
And oped a living paradise
My heart of hearts within :
O from this Eden of my life
God keep the serpent sin !
I love ! and into Angel-land,
With starry glimpses peer !
I drink in beauty like heaven-wine
When One is smiling near !
And there's a rainbow round my soul
For every rising tear.

Dear God in heaven ! keep without stain
My bosom's brooding Dove :
O clothe it meet for angel-arms
And give it place above !
For there is nothing from the world
I yearn to take but Love.

II.—NOT I, SWEET SOUL, NOT I.

ALL glorious as the Rainbow's birth,
She came in Spring-tide's golden hours ;
When Heaven went hand-in-hand with Earth,
And May was crowned with buds and flowers.
The mounting devil at my heart
Clomb faintlier, as my life did win
The charmèd heaven, she wrought apart,
To wake its better Angel in.
With radiant mien she trode serene,
And passed me smiling by !
O ! who that looked could help but love ?
Not I, sweet soul, not I.

The dewy eyelids of the Dawn
Ne'er oped such heaven as hers did show :
It seemed her dear eyes might have shone
As jewels in some starry brow.
Her face flashed glory like a shrine,
Or lily-bell with sunburst bright ;
Where came and went love-thoughts divine,
As low winds walk the leaves in light :
She wore her beauty with the grace
Of Summer's star-clad sky ;
O ! who that looked could help but love ?
Not I, sweet soul, not I.

Her budding breasts like fragrant fruit
Of love were ripening to be pressed :
Her voice, that shook my heart's red root,
Might not have broken a Babe's rest,—
More liquid than the running brooks,
More vernal than the voice of Spring,
When Nightingales are in their nooks,
And all the leafy thickets ring.
The love she coyly hid at heart
Was shyly conscious in her eye ;
O ! who that looked could help but love ?
Not I, sweet soul, not I.

III.—WOMAN.

MY fellow-men, as yet we have but seen
Wife, Sister, Mother and Daughter, not the
Queen
Upon her Throne, with all her jewels crowned.
Unknowing how to seek, we have not found
Our Goddess, waiting her Pygmalion
To woo her into Woman from the stone.

Our Husbandry hath lacked essential power
To fructify the promise of the flower ;
We have not known her nature ripe all round.

We have but seen her beauty on one side
That leaned in love to us with blush of bride :
The pure white Lily of all Womanhood
With heart all-golden still is in the bud.

We have but glimpsed a moment in her face
The glory she will give the future race ;
The strong heroic spirit knit beyond
All induration of the Diamond.

She is the natural bringer from above ;
The Earthly mirror of Immortal Love ;
The chosen Mouthpiece for the mystic Word
Of Life Divine to speak through ; and be heard
With human Voice, that makes its Heavenward call
Not in one Virgin Motherhood, but all.

Unworthy of the gift how have Men trod
Her pearls of pureness, Swine-like in the sod.
How often have they offered her the dust
And ashes of the fanned-out fires of lust ;
Or, devilishly inflamed with the divine,
Waxed drunken with the Sacramental wine.

How have Men captured her with savage grips,
To stamp the kiss of Conquest on her lips,—
As feather in their crest have worn her grace,—
Or brush of fox that crowns the hunter's chase ;
Wood her with Passions that but wed to fire
With Hymen's Torch their own funereal pyre ;

Stripped her as Slave and Temptress of Desire ;
Embraced the body when her soul was far
Beyond possession as the loftiest star.

Her Whiteness hath been tarnished by their touch ;
Her Promise hath been broken in their clutch ;
The Woman hath reflected Man too much,—
And made the Bread of Life with earthiest leaven.

Our coming Queen must be the Bride of Heaven ;
The Wife who will not wear her bonds with pride
As Adult Doll with fripperies glorified ;
The Mother fashioned on a nobler plan
Than Woman who was merely made from Man.

IV.—THE ONLY ONE.

WITH tired feet, o'er thorny ground,
My spirit made its quest ;
On wearied wing it wandered round,
But could not find a nest ;
Till at the feet of Love I found
At last my Only Rest !

I went the downward way of Doom,
With those that walk in Night :
I stumbled on from tomb to tomb
Of joys that lured my sight ;
Until Love touched me through the gloom
And smiled my Only Light.

O, sweet the touch of hearts, and sweet
The tie of Child and Wife,
And blessed is the Home where meet
True souls that shut out strife ;
And as I nestle at Love's feet,
I know my Only Life.

THE MOTHER'S IDOL BROKEN.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.

(I.)

TWICE the Mother had dived down
Into her sea of sorrow.
O my love! O my life! my own sweet Wife,
God send you a merry good-morrow.
Betide her weel, or betide her woe,
Her smile it was calm and fearless;
And proud were her eyes as she rose with the prize,
A pearl in her palms, my peerless.

O found you a little Sea-Syren,
In some perilous palace left?
Or is it a little Child Angel,
Of her high born kin bereft?
Or came she out of the Elfin land
By earthly love beguiled;
Or hath the sweet Spirit of beauty
Taken shape as our starry Child?

Dear, do but look in her love-nest of sweets,
Where she lies in a smiling calm:
Wee armful of fruitage; a sheaf of ripe bliss,
On a bosom breathing balm.
Pure as the drop of dew, pride of the morn,
On leaves of a lily in blossom;
Fresh as the fragrance newly born
In a violet's virgin bosom!

II.

(VIII.)

ALL in our Marriage-Garden
Grew, smiling up to God,
A bonnier Flower than ever
Sucked the warmth of sun and sod.
O beautiful unfathomably
Its little life unfurled ;
Love's crowning sweetness was our wee
White Rose of all the world.

From out a balmy bosom,
Our Bud of Beauty grew ;
It fed on smiles for sunshine,
And tears for daintier dew.
Aye nestling warm and tenderly,
Our leaves of love were curled
So close and close about our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Two flowers of glorious crimson
Grew with our Rose of light ;
Still kept the sweet heaven-grafted slip
Her whiteness saintly white.
They caught the breeze and danced with glee ;
They reddened as it whirled ;
White, white and wondrous grew our wee
White Rose of all the world.

With mystical faint fragrance,
Our House of Life she filled—
Revealed each hour some Fairy Tower,
Where wingèd Hopes might build.

We saw—though none like us might see—
Such precious promise pearled
Upon the petals of our wee
White Rose of all the world.

But evermore the halo
Of Angel-light increased ;
Like the mystery of Moonlight,
That folds some fairy feast.
Snow-white, snow-soft, snow-silently,
Our darling bud up-curved,
And dropped i' the Grave—God's lap—our wee
White Rose of all the world.

Our Rose was but in blossom ;
Our life was but in spring ;
When down the solemn midnight
We heard the Spirits sing :
"Another bud of infancy,
With holy dews impearled " ;
And in their hands they bore our wee
White Rose of all the world.

You scarce could think so small a thing
Would leave a loss so large ;
Her little light such shadow fling,
From Dawn to Sunset's marge.
In other Springs our life may be
In other flowers unfurled ;
But never, never match our wee
White Rose of all the world.

III.

(xvi.)

*" Pretty flowers on Baby's head ;
Who'll cry flowers when Baby's dead ? "*
Singing hearts oft questionèd
In the sweetest summer fled.

Marion, Marion.

Tearful words how lightly said !
Mournfully rememberèd
Now the sweet new year doth spread
Blossom life on baby's bed.

Marion, Marion.

Tender emerald white and red,
Flowers of her beauty bred ;
Breathing all of her that's dead,
Cry, " We crown her baby head."

Marion, Marion.

" Who'll cry flowers when Baby's dead ? "
Praying looks to heaven are led,
And it smiles as though it said
" Early her sweet fame hither sped."

Marion, Marion.

" Faith, look up and firmly tread :
Poor Bereaved, be comforted ;
I will nurse the child instead ;
My Flowers garland Baby's head."

Marion, Marion.

God's unguessed reply is read :
Tears that came not, tears that pled,
Crying darkly here are shed.
Soft rest you, Darling dead.

Marion, Marion.

POEMS FOR CHRISTIE.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—CHRISTIE'S PORTRAIT.

YOUR tiny picture makes me yearn ;
We are so far apart,
My darling, I can only turn
And kiss you in my heart.
A thousand tender thoughts a-wing,
Swarm in a summer clime,
And hover round it murmuring
Like bees at honey-time.

Upon a little girl I look
Whose pureness makes me sad ;
I read as in a holy book,
I grow in secret glad :
It seems my darling comes to me
With something I have lost,
Over life's tossed and troubled sea,
On some celestial coast.

I think of her when spirit-bowed ;
A glory fills the place ;
Like sudden light on swords, the proud
Smile flashes in my face :
And others see, in passing by,
But cannot understand
The vision shining in mine eye,
My strength of heart and hand.

That grave content and touching grace
Bring tears into mine eyes ;
She makes my heart a holy place
Where hymns and incense rise !

Such calm her gentle spirit brings
As—smiling overhead—
White statued saints with peaceful wings
Shadow the sleeping dead.

Our Christie is no rosy Grace
With beauty all may see,
But I have never felt a face
Grow half so dear to me.
No curling hair about her brows,
Like many merry girls ;
Well, straighter to my heart it goes
And round it curls and curls.

Meek as the wood-anemone glints
To see if skies are blue,
Is my pale flower with her tints
Of heaven shining thro' !
She will be poor and never fret,
Sleep sound and lowly lie ;
Will live her quiet life, and let
The great world-storm go by.

Dear love ! God keep her in His grasp,
Meek maiden, or brave Wife !
Till his good Angels softly clasp
Her closed book of life ;
And this true picture of the Sun,
With birthday blessings given,
Shall fade before a glorious one
Taken of her in heaven.

II.—LITTLE WILLIE.

POOR little Willie
With his many pretty wiles ;
Worlds of wisdom in his look
And quaint quiet smiles ;
Hair of amber touched with
Gold of heaven so brave ;
All lying darkly hid
In a Workhouse Grave !

In the day we wandered foodless,
Little Willie cried for bread !
In the night we wandered homeless,
Little Willie cried for bed.
Parted at the Workhouse door,
Not a word we said.
Ah, so tired was poor Willie,
And so sweetly sleep the dead.

You remember little Willie ;
Such a funny fellow ! he
Sprang like a lily
From the dirt of poverty.
Poor little Willie
Not a friend was nigh,
When from the cold world
He crouched down to die.

'Twas in the dead of winter
We laid him in the earth ;
The world brought in the new year
Mocking us with mirth :

But for lost little Willie,
Not a tear we crave ;
Cold and hunger cannot wake him
In his Workhouse Grave.

We thought him beautiful,
Felt it hard to part ;
We to him were dutiful.
Down, down poor heart !
The storms they may beat ;
The winter winds may rave,
Little Willie feels not
In his Workhouse Grave.

No room for little Willie ;
In the world he had no part ;
On him stared the Gorgon-eye
Through which looks no heart.
Come to me, said Heaven ;
And, if Heaven will save,
We will grieve not, though the door
Was a Workhouse Grave.

CRIES OF FORTY-EIGHT.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—THIS WORLD IS FULL OF BEAUTY.

THERE lives a Voice within me, a guest-angel of
my heart,
And its bird-like warbles win me, till the tears
a-tremble start ;

Up evermore it springeth, like some magic melody,
And evermore it singeth this sweet song of songs
to me—

“This world is full of beauty, as other worlds
above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love.”

Morn's budding, bright, melodious hour comes
sweetly as of yore ;

Night's starry tendernesses dower with glory ever-
more :

But there be million hearts accursed, where no glad
sunbursts shine,

And there be million souls athirst for Life's immortal
wine.

“This world is full of beauty, as other worlds
above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love.”

If faith, and hope, and kindness passed, as coin,
'twixt heart and heart,

Up through the eye's tear-blindness, how the sudden
soul should start !

The dreary, dim, and desolate, would wear a sunny bloom,

And Love should spring from buried Hate, like flowers from Winter's tomb.

"This world is full of beauty, as other worlds above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love."

Were truth our uttered language, Spirits might talk with men,

And God-illuminated earth should see the Golden Age again ;

The burthened heart should soar in mirth like Morn's young prophet-lark,

And Misery's last tear wept on earth quench Hell's last cunning spark !

"This world is full of beauty, as other worlds above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love."

We hear the cry for bread with plenty smiling all around ;

Hill and valley in their bounty blush for Man with fruitage crowned.

What a merry world it might be, opulent for all, and aye,

With all its lands that ask for labour, and its wealth that wastes away !

"This world is full of beauty, as other worlds above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love."

The leaf-tongues of the forest, and the flower-lips of the sod—

The happy Birds that hymn their raptures in the ear of God—

The summer wind that bringeth music over land and
sea,

Have each a voice that singeth this sweet song of
songs to me—

“This world is full of beauty, as other worlds
above ;

And, if we did our duty, it might be as full of love.”

II.—TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

HIGH hopes that burn'd like stars sublime,
Go down i' the heaven of freedom ;

And true hearts perish in the time

We bitterliest need 'em !

But never sit we down and say

There's nothing left but sorrow ;

We walk the wilderness to-day—

The promised land to-morrow !

Our birds of song are silent now,

Few are the flowers blooming,

Yet life is in the frozen bough,

And freedom's spring is coming ;

And freedom's tide creeps up alway,

Though we may strand in sorrow ;

And our good bark aground to-day,

Shall float again to-morrow.

'Tis weary watching wave by wave,

And yet the Tide heaves onward ;

We climb, like Corals, grave by grave,

That pave a pathway sunward ;

We are driven back, for our next fray

A newer strength to borrow,

And where the Vanguard camps To-day

The Rear shall rest To-morrow !

Through all the long, dark night of years
The people's cry ascendeth,
And earth is wet with blood and tears :
But our meek sufferance endeth !
The few shall not for ever sway—
The many moil in sorrow ;
The powers of hell are strong to-day,
The Christ shall rise to-morrow !

Though hearts brood o'er the past, our eyes
With smiling futures glisten !
For lo ! our day bursts up the skies
Lean out your souls and listen !
The world is rolling freedom's way,
And ripening with her sorrow ;
Take heart ! who bear the Cross to-day,
Shall wear the Crown to-morrow !

O youth ! flame-earnest, still aspire
With energies immortal !
To many a heaven of desire
Our yearning opes a portal ;
And though age wearies by the way,
And hearts break in the furrow—
Youth sows the golden grain to-day—
The harvest comes to-morrow !

Build up heroic lives, and all
Be like a sheathen sabre,
Ready to flash out at God's call—
O chivalry of labour !
Triumph and toil are twins ; though they
Be singly born in sorrow,
And 'tis the martyrdom to-day
Brings victory to-morrow !

APOLOGUES.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—THE YOUTH AND THE ANGEL.

ONCE on a time, when immortals
To Earth came visibly down,
There went a Youth with an Angel
Through the gates of an Eastern Town :
They passed a dog by the roadside,
Where dead and rotting it lay,
And the Youth at the sickening odour
Shuddered and turned away :
He gathered his robes about him,
And hastily hurried thence ;
But nought annoyed the Angel's
Clear, pure, immortal sense.

By came a Lady, lip-luscious,
On delicate tinkling feet ;
All the place grew glad with her presence,
The air about her sweet ;
For she came in fragrance floating ;
Her voice most silverly rang ;
And the youth to embrace her beauty,
With all his being sprang.
A sweet, delightful Lady !
And yet the legend saith,
The Angel, while he passed her,
Shuddered, and held his breath.

II.—HOW IT SEEMS.

STARS in the Midnight's blue abyss,
So closely shine, they seem to kiss ;
But, Darling, they are far apart ;
They close not beating heart to heart :

And high in glory many a Star
Glow, lighting other worlds afar,
Whilst hiding in its breast the dearth
And darkness of a fireless hearth.

All happy to the listener seems ;
The singer, with his gracious gleams ;
His music rings, his ardours glow
Divinely : ah, we know, we know !

For all the beauty he sheds, we see
How bare his own poor life may be ;
He gives Ambrosia, wanting bread ;
Makes balm for Hearts, with ache of head.

He finds the Laurel budding yet,
From Love transfigured and tear-wet ;
They are his life-drops turned to Flowers,
That make so sweet this world of ours

LATER POEMS.

GERALD MASSEY.

I.—ROOT AND FLOWER.

1889.

A FLOAT, unfolding from the bud
The Water-lily lies ;
Her root of life is in the mud,
While blossoming for the skies ;
But root in mire, or flower in sun,
In Earth and Heaven they are one !

Her life gropes darkly down at root,
But climbs with all its power ;
And whether low on Earth afoot,
Or head in Heaven a-flower—
In Shadow of cloud, or smile of Sun
In Earth and Heaven the life is one.

My life is as the root in Earth,
That from its lowly tomb
Hath put a living flower forth
For everlasting bloom ;
And whatsoever tides may run
Betwixt us, Root and Flower are one.

The winds may rock, the waters roll,
Our root of life above,
They cannot sever us in soul,—
We who are one in love !
For Love hath warrant to defy
Even Death to break its tenderest tie.

They think that Death hath plucked my Bud
And left a broken stalk
To bleed and wither in the mud :
So blindly do they talk !
To both of us my life is Root ;
For both, my Flower bears the fruit.

They think my Darling cannot come
To visit me once more,
Who dream the dead are deaf and dumb ;
Who speak of life as o'er :
But 'twixt us, Root and Flower, we know
There is continual come and go.

My Darling breathes diviner air,
And brings her Heaven down
Where low I lie but loftily wear
Her glory for my crown ;
I feel the heavenward impulse stir ;
I know that new life comes from her !

'Tis in descending from above
That Love is most divine ;
But as the tide returns, O Love !
Bear back this love of mine,
And say love cannot be more true,
But now 'tis greater than we knew.

I see Her, strangely glorified,
My Lily of the Light !
At times she lifts me to her side
From out my earthly night :
I look through her illumined eyes
On lands where daylight never dies.

No thought of me must mar with pain
The fairness of her face ;
No blush for me must ever stain
Her purity and grace.
I feel my Flower Above will show
How life is lived at root below.

Dear Love ! and if my life can feed
A Flower the Angels see,
In thought and feeling, word and deed,
How pure that life should be !
How rich the Root that hour by hour
Draws life from its immortal Flower !

II.—LOVE IN HEAVEN.

DEAR God, how good to let me see
The face of "Love in Heaven" once more !
The face that waits to welcome me
On that torch-lighted shore ;
When Life is growing dark enough
To kindle Beacon-fires of love !

A new life quivers through me, quick
With longing never felt before ;
But the old mortal life grows sick
And ailing to the core ;
As if 'twere sloughing off the earth
In pangs that give the new life birth.

Ay me ! the momentary gain
Was followed by abiding loss !
Bewildered Memory strives in vain
To know the Vision was—
That left no likeness ; and that I
Know nought on earth to know it by !

Last night unveiled its perfect Star,
For one immortal moment seen ;
To-day the Vision fades afar
As it had never been !
And yet the glory came to bless
With added sense of preciousness.

She would have had me share her calm,
But thrilled me with divine desire ;
She would have brought me cooling balm,
But filled my soul with fire !
And O ! her sweetness almost slew
Me, as it pierced me through and through !

Eager as Lightning's was her glance ;
And lo ! by light of day I find
My spirit must have fallen in trance,
With that great splendour blind ;
Her vanished face I shall not see
Until she comes to waken me !

O ! sighing Soul, we must be still,
Nor let sad breath the mirror dim,
Lest she descend once more to fill
My being to the brim ;
When 'tis again divinely given
To see the face of " Love in Heaven."

George Meredith.

1828.

GEORGE MEREDITH was born in Hampshire, on February 12th, 1828, and received part of his early education in Germany. He was intended for the legal profession, and went through the preliminary training, but a native bent towards literature was too strong to be restrained, and at an early age he turned his back upon law, and devoted himself to the life of letters. His earliest work was in verse, and in 1851, the year of his twenty-third birthday, he published a volume of "Poems," the audience of which may have been "fit," but was certainly "few." The book was dedicated to Thomas Love Peacock, whose daughter had become Mr. Meredith's wife; and one of the most appreciative of its critics was Mr. W. M. Rossetti, the poet and his reviewer being destined in later years to be fellow house-mates with Dante Rossetti and Mr. Swinburne at the well-known 16, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea. Temporarily discouraged, it may be, by the tepid reception of this volume Mr. Meredith turned his attention to prose, and in 1855 published "The Shaving of Shagpat: an Arabian Entertainment." This fascinating and yet tantalising performance, of bizarre inventive fantasy all compact, made the name of its author familiar, not indeed to the world at large, but to that select class of readers who are attracted by any

strong and promising individuality of conception and treatment. It was followed two years later by "*Farina: a Legend of Cologne*," in which the romantic fiction of Germany was subjected to the imaginatively burlesque handling which in its predecessor had been devoted to the stories of "*The Thousand and One Nights*." Two years again elapsed before the appearance of "*The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*," in which the really characteristic qualities of Mr. Meredith's intellectual and imaginative idiosyncrasy first made themselves fully manifest; and since 1859 his biography, so far as the public is concerned, is simply the record of the publication of the series of works by which he has slowly achieved what may accurately be described as a unique reputation. The one great sorrow of his life finds a reticently pathetic memorial in the first of the "*Epitaphs*" at the close of the volume "*A Reading of Earth*"; and the later years of his widowhood have been spent with his daughters in his pretty cottage among the Surrey hills.

In speaking of Mr. Meredith's poetry the first thing needing to be said is that his prose achievement is a natural growth, while his work in verse is a product of deliberate choice. His speaking voice is an affair of organisation; his singing voice is the result of careful training. Some fervid devotees have had the temerity to place him at the head of living novelists: no admirer, howsoever indiscriminating, would dare to place him even in the front rank of living poets; and yet the qualities which give to his work permanent interest and value are more clearly visible here and there in his verse than in any of his novels, save perhaps in one or two

passages, such as the description of the early meetings of Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough, where the form only is that of prose, while the emotional pitch and imaginative plane are the pitch and plane of poetry. Such a chapter as that entitled "Ferdinand and Miranda" has the Miltonic essentials of poetry: it is simple, sensuous, passionate; and even a person of very moderate sensibility will be aware in reading it that he is in the presence of a writer with the poet's capacity of feeling and rendering, and possibly or probably, therefore, the poet's command of that medium of utterance in which such capacity naturally expresses itself. If, however, he turns from such a passage to one of Mr. Meredith's slim volumes of verse his disappointment will probably be great and bitter, unless some rare guidance of happy fortune leads him to the small group of poems of which later on something must be said. Simplicity will reveal itself only too seldom, and though he will discern that sensuousness and passion are less scantily represented, he will often feel that they are so strenuously intellectualised, so tricked out in complexities of elaborated metaphor, as to be deprived of their essential character.

Specially will this be so if he opens the volume containing "Modern Love" which to Mr. Meredith's enthusiastic disciples represents the high-water mark of his poetic genius. The work is in form a dramatic monologue; written in a series of fifty poems of sonnet-like character though not of sonnet structure, each devoted to a single mood or situation, and all combining in the building up of a bloodless, but none the less sombre, domestic tragedy. The story is that of a husband who knows that another has super-

seded him in his wife's affections; and while he knows also that her pride of virtue has preserved inviolate the body's loyalty, the unconsummated treason of the heart gives even to her graciousness and beauty a quality of repulsiveness proportioned to the magnetic drawing of the dead days of mutual passion. The moods in which the old attraction asserts itself in opposition to the new repulsion provide themes for the greater number of the stanza-poems, and the situation becomes still more complex when the husband turns to bask in the smiles of a mistress to whom he is driven less by the promptings of passion than by a morbid longing to learn whether his wife's loveliness has rendered her insusceptible of those jealous pangs by which he is himself consumed. Apparently—for here the narrative indications become somewhat vague—her own defect of love has brought with it no defect of trust: her heart's unfaithfulness is bitterer to her because she believes him true: and so when after the long fatal silence there comes a moment of mutual confession the knowledge of his wilful fall impels her to seek death in order that he may find happiness with the woman to whom she believes that his heart has turned.

It will be seen that the dramatic motive is far-fetched and fantastic, with no recognisable hold upon the actualities of human nature. In an elaborate work of prose fiction—such, for example, as “*The Egoist*”—where it would have been possible to note each *nuance* of development in a sequence of complex emotions,—it might have gained a certain measure of imaginative credibility; but of this credibility the disjointed staccato movement of the allusive narration

inevitably deprives it. As a matter of fact the merely dramatic interest is largely subordinate. The *raison d'être* of the poem seems to be the exposition of a philosophy of love—of its genesis, its development, and its decay—as such a philosophy might formulate itself in a mind unbalanced by the collapse of an ideal upon the stability of which depended its own equipoise. The exposition as a whole lacks lucidity, and many sections of the poem are written in a kind of metaphorical shorthand which renders them gratuitously difficult; but the central idea seems to be that the wedded pair have found life and love a failure because they have expected too much from them; and thus, in following a will-o'-the-wisp of possible rapture, they have forsaken the highway of commonplace happiness and fallen into a bog of despair and disillusion from which there is no escape. Thus, in the tenth section, the husband asks "But where began the change, and what's my crime?" and then he soliloquises,—

"Prepare

You lovers to know Love a thing of moods :
 Not like hard life, of laws. In Love's deep woods
 I dreamt of loyal Life :—the offence is there !
 Love's jealous woods about the sun are curled ;
 At least the sun far brighter there did beam.—
 My crime is that, the puppet of a dream,
 I plotted to be worthy of the world.
 Oh, had I with my darling helped to mince
 The facts of life, you still had seen me go
 With hindward feather and with forward toe,
 Her much-adored, delightful Fairy Prince."

In a later section he meditates upon the gay merry-making of some rustic revellers, with souls that stray not beyond the dance and the moment; and looking back to the time when he lived a life like theirs, and

knew "the May-fly pleasures of a mind at ease," he exclaims

"Heaven keep them happy! Nature they seem near.
They must, I think, be wiser than I am;
They have the secret of the bull and lamb.
'Tis true that when we trace its source, 'tis beer."

This is the climax of cynicism in its mocking mood. The happiness born of beer is preferable to the misery of an awakened spirit, looking before and after and pining for what is not. In the concluding section which sums up the whole, not in the words of the husband but of the poet who throughout acts as chorus, the mocking note has subsided into one of gloomy, pessimistic reflection.

"Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
The union of this ever-diverse pair!
These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.
Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:
But they fed not on the advancing hours:
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Oh, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life!—
In tragic hints we see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore."

The last three lines are fine, and similar isolated beauties occur throughout the poem.

"Not till the fire is dying in the grate
Look we for any kinship with the stars."

* * * * *

"A kiss is but a kiss now! and no wave
Of a great flood that whirls me to the sea."

* * * * *

"O have a care of natures that are mute !
They punish you in acts."

* * * * *

"In tragic life, God wot,
No villain need be ! Passions spin the plot :
We are betrayed by what is false within."

* * * * *

"But in the largeness of the evening earth
Our spirits grew as we went side by side.
The hour became her husband and my bride."

Every one of these is a word of imagination or insight ; but the poem as a whole is a morbid conception embodied by a huddling together of strangled metaphors and hints for epigrams. It is all strain, there is no repose ; it lacks the satisfying quality of adequate final expression. When not incompetent critics speak of "Modern Love" as its author's masterpiece, they deliver themselves of a judgment which is not only fantastic but injurious, because it tends to divert attention from other work which has the very charms of healthy emotion, clear vision, and simple rendering which are here so conspicuously deficient.

Mr. Le Gallienne in his interesting, if not always convincing, study of George Meredith speaks somewhat slightly of those ordinary people, not connoisseurs, who quote "Juggling Jerry," or some other of the "Poems of the English Roadside," as if they represented Mr. Meredith at his best. The critic admits that these poems are fine, but declares somewhat oracularly, that "not in them resides the incommunicable"; and hints that they are to "Modern Love" what the Laureate's "Northern Farmer" is to "In Memoriam" and the "Idylls of the King." This may be their relation from the point

of view of the literary *gourmet*, for whom the Meredithian idiosyncrasy both in prose and verse is one of those aristocratic delicacies which appeal to an acquired taste ; but the natural palate may be trusted to discover the diet which has a universally palatable and nutritious quality. Both the poet and the philosopher in their different ways are the discoverers and proclaimers of the universal truth underlying the individual fact ; and the greatest poetry of the world—the poetry of Homer and Shakespeare—is that in which both the matter and the manner are of universal interest. Such universality can be predicated of “Juggling Jerry” as it cannot be predicated of “Modern Love,” and in virtue of it the former poem stands upon a higher plane. The old juggler represents a type so broadly human that it has been, is, and will be familiar to every country and to every age ; he may indeed without exaggeration be called Homeric, for he is a homely Odysseus who has had his life of wandering, has looked upon the world with shrewd open eyes, and has acquired the simple wisdom born of such an experience.

“ Pitch here the tent, while the old horse grazes ;
 By the old hedge-side we'll halt a stage.
 It's nigh my last above the daisies ;
 My next leaf'll be man's blank page.
 Yes, my old girl ! and it's no use crying :
 Juggler, constable, king must bow.
 One that outjuggles all's been spying
 Long to have me, and has me now.

* * * * *

Here's where the lads of the village cricket :
 I was a lad not wide from here :
 Couldn't I juggle the bale off the wicket ?
 Like an old world those days appear !

Donkey, sheep, geese, and thatched ale-house. I know 'em ;
 They're old friends of my halts, and seem,
 Somehow, as if kind thanks I owe 'em :
 Juggling don't hinder the heart's esteem.

Juggling's no sin, for we must have victual :
 Nature allows us to bait for the fool.
 Holding one's own makes us juggle no little ;
 But to increase it hard juggling's the rule.
 You that are sneering at my profession,
 Haven't you juggled a vast amount ?
 There's the Prime Minister in one Session
 Juggles more games than my sins'll count.

* * * * *

I've studied men from my topsy turvy
 Close, and I reckon rather true.
 Some are fine fellows, some right scurvy :
 Most a dash between the two.
 But it's a woman, old girl, that makes me
 Think more kindly of the race :
 And it's a woman, old girl, that shakes me
 When the Great Juggler I must face."

And so the dying old nomad rambles on with his philosophy of life, wholesomely human and flavoured with a dash of not unkindly cynicism, till the thoughts of the past merge into the consciousness of the present, and sense and soul respond for the last time, with the keen emotion of a farewell greeting, to the sweet influences of Nature, his oldest friend and comrade.

"Yonder came smells of the gorse, so nutty,
 Goldlike and warm : it's the prime of May.
 Better than mortar, brick, and putty,
 Is God's house on a blowing day.
 Lean me more up the mound ; now I feel it :
 All the old heath-smells ! Ain't it strange ?
 There's the world laughing as if to conceal it,
 But He is by us, juggling the change."

Whether it be "incommunicable" or not there is

a something in such a stanza as this—a fulness of life, a keenness of sensation, an ecstasy of simple human enjoyment—which makes some of us feel that we would rather have written it than we would have written all the recondite verses which the coteries hug as their peculiar possession. Not that the passage stands alone; for whenever Mr. Meredith is content to feel Nature rather than to analyse her, he reveals himself as a seer whose every glance is unerring, a singer whose every note is clear and true. Such poems, or portions of such poems, as "The Woods of Westermain," "The Lark Ascending," "Hard Weather," "Autumn Even-song," to name only four out of many, stand almost alone in modern poetry. Various English poets, for example, have sung of the skylark, but by all of them—with, perhaps, the solitary exception of Hogg—the bird has been more or less spiritualised or moralised: the actual theme has been charged with, and sometimes almost overlaid by, a burden of ethical or intellectual significance supplied by the mind of the human singer rather than inevitably suggested by the mounting minstrel of the sky. Towards the close of the second of the poems just named, Mr. Meredith, like Shelley and Wordsworth, uses the lark as a text for a discourse not less true and beautiful than theirs; but in the earlier verses, he sees, hears, feels the object as in itself it really is, and renders it with an opulence of sensuous and emotional realisation which his predecessors with all their magic fail to achieve. Their poems are lovely; each of them is, indeed, in its own way perfect; but if a man who had never heard the skylark longed to know all that words could tell him of the rippling

rapture of that marvellous music of the air, his lack of one of the most exquisite of all the joys of sense would be supplied more inadequately—or perhaps one ought to say less inadequately—by Mr. Meredith than by either Wordsworth or Shelley. Hogg comes nearer to the bird, but his bounding lyric, fine as it is, might have been written of rumour rather than of the close loving knowledge, the very absorption of intimacy, which makes itself manifest in every phrase of a song which is itself lark-like:—

“ He rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake
All interwoven and spreading wide,
Like water-dimples down a tide
Where ripple ripple overcurls,
And eddy into eddy whirls ;
A press of hurried notes that run
So fleet they scarce are more than one,
Yet changingly the trills repeat
And linger ringing while they fleet,

As up he wings the spiral stair,
A song of light, and pierces air
With fountain ardour, fountain play
To reach the shining tops of day,
And drink in everything discerned
An ecstasy to music turned,
Impelled by what his happy bill
Disperses ; drinking, showering still,
Unthinking save that he may give
His voice the outlet, there to live
Renewed in endless notes of glee,
So thirsty of his voice is he,
For all to hear and all to know
That he is joy, awake, aglow,
The tumult of the heart to hear
Through pureness filtered crystal-clear,

And know the pleasure sprinkled bright
 By simple singing of delight,
 Shrill, irreflective, unrestrained
 Rapt, ringing, on the jet sustained
 Without a break, without a fall,
 Sweet silvery, sheer lyrical,
 Perennial, quavering up the chord
 Like myriad dews of sunny sward
 That trembling into fulness shine,
 And sparkle dropping argentine."

This is a fine rendering of the ecstasy of eager impassioned life, but Mr. Meredith is not less skilful in his treatment of quiet and reposeful effects of homely landscape. How rich in true poetic pictorialism, and how full of the pensive sentiment of twilight are the following stanzas from the "Autumn Evensong":—

"The long cloud edged with streaming gray
 Soars from the west ;
 The red leaf mounts with it away
 Showing the nest
 A blot among the branches bare :
 There is a cry of outcasts in the air.

"Swift little breezes, darting chill,
 Pant down the lake ;
 A crow flies from the yellow hill
 And in its wake
 A baffled line of labouring rooks :
 Steel-surfaced to the light the river looks.

* * * * *

"Pale the rain-rutted roadways shine
 In the green light
 Behind the cedar and the pine :
 Come thundering night !
 Blacken broad earth with hoards of storm,
 For me yon valley cottage beckons warm."

Here again we have work that is at once very characteristic and very beautiful. Mr. Meredith had a happy thought when he chose as a title for one of his volumes, "A Reading of Earth," for earth has had few more fervidly studious readers than he. Indeed, it may be said that outside a few memorable passages of Browning, we have little if any verse in which the life of the poet becomes so utterly identified with the life of the world—not the emotional life or mystic spiritual life discerned in it by what Mr. Ruskin calls "the pathetic fallacy," but the verifiable natural life which mingles with our own in those avenues of sense where sages and clowns are alike wayfarers. The poet might truthfully say, with the hero of his "Beggar's Soliloquy,"

"I'm clothed like with natural sights and sounds :

To myself I'm in tune : I hope you're as well " ;

and the perfect fit of the vesture, the perfect accord of the harmony, make themselves delightfully manifest.

There is much in Mr. Meredith's poetry that is strained, artificial, obscure ; there is much that is strong, picturesque, penetrating, but his true individuality is made manifest most clearly and delightfully in those poems in which he deals with the sensuous side of Nature and the homelier conditions of unsophisticated human life. Some of the finest of the Nature-poems have been named or quoted, but there are others which are not unworthy of their companionship ; and the entire group is an inspiring and bracing anthology of the open air. The human charm and quick sympathy of "Juggling Jerry" reappear in such poems as

"Grandfather Bridgeman" and "Martin's Puzzle," while in "The Old Chartist" and "The Orchard and the Heath," nature and humanity are mingled in mutual interpretation. In such work as this Mr. Meredith achieves an unwonted simplicity, and with the simplicity a directness of vision and a force of presentation which give to his work a fine invigorating quality of stimulation and refreshment. He will never be a popular poet, and yet he has written poems which deserve the best kind of popularity.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

Walter Thornbury.

1828—1876.

GEORGE WALTER THORNBURY, the son of a London solicitor, was born in the autumn of 1828. As a lad, he conceived various projects for his future career, but, after wavering between literature, painting, and the Church, finally adopted the first as a profession, although he could never quite forego some dallying with the fine arts. When only seventeen he began his literary labours by contributing to the *Bristol Journal* a series of articles on topography. Coming up to London he obtained introductions to the editors of various publications, and commenced writing for them on a wide variety of themes articles which were, in most cases, afterwards collected and published in book form.

In 1851, Thornbury published his first volume of verse entitled "Lays and Legends; or, Ballads of the New World." This work, now so scarce, although by no means destitute of poetic power, gave little inkling of his future style. The "New World Ballads" are both vigorous and picturesque; the translations which follow them are conventional, and the miscellaneous pieces do not exhibit any signs of marked originality.

In 1855, under the title of the "Monarchs of the Main," Thornbury published an interesting history of the Buccaneers, the materials for which were derived

chiefly from foreign sources. The following year appeared his work on "Shakespeare's England during the reign of Elizabeth." Whilst these and various other works were in progress, he was a constant contributor to the leading periodicals of the day. He now left home and travelled some time abroad, visiting in the course of his peregrinations Turkey, Spain, and other parts of Europe, and then Egypt, Palestine, and the United States, supplying the press during his rambles with a succession of works on the countries visited.

Returning to England Thornbury greatly enhanced his poetic reputation by the publication, in 1857, of his "Songs of the Cavaliers and Roundheads," a volume that at once proved his right to be reckoned among the singers of his native land. It contains nothing poor in style, is replete with colour, and is the production of a writer who has achieved a distinct individuality. The songs, if oftentimes more suited for recitation than singing, are full of spirited fancy, and are characterised by their author's faculty for artistic contrasts of colour. Examples of Thornbury's power of associating harmonious hues may be found on nearly every page, and impart a rich tone to his verse. So happily are his colours blended or contrasted that, as has been justly said, his pen more often seemed laden with pigment rather than ink, and out of his mere words it is easy to "make pictures when our eyes are shut." All the brilliancy, and indeed all the squalor of the Stuart epoch, is displayed as vividly in Thornbury's verse as on the canvases of a painter. Sometimes, it is true, in his striving after the grotesque he outrages the tenets of true art and, as in "The Dance Round the Plague Pit," becomes

disgusting, instead of being merely quaint. Despite this blemish, the "Songs of the Cavaliers" and their accompanying "Jacobite Songs" are brimful of the spirit which animated the Stuart partisans, and are fairly typical of the heartlessness and gallantry which characterised the followers of the second Charles and his less fortunate relatives. Altogether the book was an immense advance on Thornbury's former volume of verse, although it contained nothing to equal many of the poems which he subsequently contributed to contemporary publications. These, for startling incident and straightforward story, are more akin to the ballads of Bürger, Schiller, and other German narrative lyrists than to any British poet's. Yet they have a tone and style that can at once be recognised as that of Thornbury and of no one else. Take, for instance, "The Silver Fan," called, by the way, "An Elizabethan Legend"; but evidently suggested by Schiller's "Diver." In this thoroughly representative poem no line is expended in thought or sentiment. Every sentence serves but to make the picture, or series of pictures, more and more palpable; and yet when the story is told the pathos of it is as apparent and as deeply felt, as if the poet had sermonised in every stanza. In its way, without a word of comment or sentiment from the author, "Smith of Maudlin," another fugitive piece, is far more suggestive of the mutability of life and its enjoyments than any doleful ditty or lachrymal dirge could be. The very first stanza gives a picture as true to life as it is direct and undespondent:—

"My chums will burn their Indian weeds
The very night I pass away,
And cloud-propelling puff and puff
As white the thin smoke melts away;

Then Jones of Wadham, eyes half-closed,
Rubbing the ten hairs on his chin,
Will say, 'This very pipe I use
Was poor old Smith's of Maudlin.' "

This realistic naturalness is maintained and strengthened up to the very last line.

"The Court Historian," another poem of the same period in Thornbury's life, is equally typical of its author, although as wealthy in word-painting as the previous piece is bare of adornment. The historic foundation for it is as mythical as "The Silver Fan's," but its accuracy is none the less *vraisemblant* :—

"The Monk Arnulphus uncorked his ink,
That shone with a blood-red light,
Just as the sun began to sink ;
His vellum was pumiced a silvery white :
'The Basileus'—for so he began—
'Is a royal sagacious Mars of a man,
Than the very lion bolder ;
He has married the stately widow of Thrace'—
'Hush!' cried a voice at his shoulder."

In 1875 appeared, as an appropriate ending of Thornbury's short laborious life, a magnificent selection from his best poetic work, styled "Legendary and Historic Ballads." It was his last and most prized volume, although it did not conclude his work, for he literally died in harness, the pen being barely dry, when he suddenly and prematurely died on Sunday, the 11th June, 1876.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

SONGS OF THE CAVALIERS AND ROUND-HEADS.

1857.

WALTER THORNBURY.

I.—THE SALLY FROM COVENTRY.

“**P**ASSION o’ me !” cried Sir Richard Tyrone,
Spurring the sparks from the broad paving-stone,
“ Better turn nurse and rock children to sleep,
Than yield to a rebel old Coventry Keep.
No, by my halidom, no one shall say,
Sir Richard Tyrone gave a city away.”

Passion o’ me ! how he pulled at his beard.
Fretting and chafing if any one sneered,
Clapping his breastplate and shaking his fist,
Giving his grizzly moustachios a twist,
Running the protocol through with his steel,
Grinding the letter to mud with his heel.

Then he roared out for a pottle of sack,
Clapped the old trumpeter twice on the back,
Leaped on his bay with a dash and a swing,
Bade all the bells in the city to ring,
And when the red flag from the steeple went down,
Open they flung every gate in the town.

To boot ! and to horse ! and away like a flood,
A fire in their eyes, and a sting in their blood ;
Hurrying out with a flash and a flare,
A roar of hot guns, a loud trumpeter’s blare,
And first, sitting prond as a king on his throne,
At the head of them all dashed Sir Richard Tyrone.

Crimson and yellow, and purple and dun,
Fluttering scarf, flowing bright in the sun,
Steel like a mirror on brow and on breast,
Scarlet and white on their feather and crest,
Banner that blew in a torrent of red,
Borne by Sir Richard, who rode at their head.

The "trumpet" went down—with a gash on his poll,
Struck by the parters of body and soul.
Forty saddles were empty; the horses ran red
With foul Puritan blood from the slashes that bled.
Curses and cries and a gnashing of teeth,
A grapple and stab on the slippery heath,
And Sir Richard leaped up on the fool that went down,
Proud as a conqueror donning his crown.

They broke them a way through a flooding of fire,
Trampling the best blood of London to mire,
When suddenly rising a smoke and a blaze,
Made all "the dragon's sons" stare in amaze:
"O ho!" quoth Sir Richard, "my city grows hot,
I've left it rent paid to the villanous Scot."

II.—THE THREE SCARS.

THIS I got on the day that Goring
Fought through York, like a wild beast roaring—
The roofs were black, and the streets were full,
The doors built up with the packs of wool;
But our pikes made way through a storm of shot,
Barrel to barrel till locks grew hot;
Frere fell dead, and Lucas was gone,
But the drum still beat and the flag went on.

This I caught from a swinging sabre,
 All I had from a long night's labour ;
 When Chester flamed, and the streets were red,
 In splashing shower fell the molten lead,
 The fire sprang up, and the old roof split,
 The fire-ball burst in the middle of it ;
 With a clash and a clang the troopers they ran,
 For the siege was over ere well began.

This I got from a pistol butt
 (Lucky my head's not a hazel nut ;)
 The horse they raced, and scudded and swore ;
 There were Leicestershire gentlemen, seventy score ;
 Up came the "Lobsters," covered with steel—
 Down we went with a stagger and reel ;
 Smash at the flag, I tore it to rag,
 And carried it off to my foraging bag.

III.—THE CAVALIER'S ESCAPE.

TRAMPLE! trample! went the roan,
 Trap! trap! went the grey ;
 But pad! *pad!* PAD! like a thing that was mad,
 My chestnut broke away.
 It was just five miles from Salisbury town,
 And but one hour to day.

Thud! THUD! came on the heavy roan,
 Rap! RAP! the mettled grey ;
 But my chestnut mare was of blood so rare,
 That she showed them all the way.
 Spur on! spur on!—I doffed my hat,
 And wished them all good day.

They splashed through miry rut and pool—
 Splintered through fence and rail ;

But chestnut Kate switched over the gate—
I saw them droop and tail :
To Salisbury town—but a mile of down,
Once over this brook and rail.

Trap ! trap ! I heard their echoing hoofs,
Past the walls of mossy stone ;
The roan flew on at a staggering pace,
But blood is better than bone.
I patted old Kate and gave her the spur,
For I knew it was all my own.

But trample ! trample ! came their steeds,
And I saw their wolf's eyes burn ;
I felt like a royal hart at bay,
And made me ready to turn.
I looked where highest grew the may,
And deepest arched the fern.

I flew at the first knave's sallow throat ;
One blow, and he was down,
The second rogue fired twice and missed ;
I sliced the villain's crown.
Clove through the rest, and flogged brave Kate,
Fast, fast, to Salisbury town.

Pad ! pad ! they came on the level sward,
Thud ! thud ! upon the sand ;
With a gleam of swords, and a burning match,
And a shaking of flag and hand :
But one long bound, and I passed the gate
Safe from the canting band.

JACOBITE BALLADS.

WALTER THORNBURY.

I.—THE THREE TROOPERS.

DURING THE PROTECTORATE.

INTO the Devil tavern
Three booted troopers strode,
From spur to feather spotted and splashed
With the mud of a winter road.
In each of their cups they dropped a crust,
And stared at the guests with a frown ;
Then drew their swords, and roared for a toast,
“God send this Crum-well-down !”

A blue smoke rose from their pistol locks,
Their sword blades were still wet ;
There were long red smears on their jerkins of buff,
As the table they overset.
Then into their cups they stirred the crusts,
And cursed old London town ;
They waved their swords, and drank with a stamp,
“God send this Crum-well-down !”

The 'prentice dropped his can of beer,
The host turned pale as a clout ;
The ruby nose of the toping squires
Grew white at the wild men's shout.
Then into their cups they flung their crusts,
And shewed their teeth with a frown ;
They flashed their swords as they gave the toast,
“God send this Crum-well-down !”

The gambler dropped his dog's-ear'd cards,
The waiting-women screamed,
As the light of the fire, like stains of blood,
On the wild men's sabres gleamed.
Then into their cups they splashed their crusts,
And cursed the fool of a town,
And leapt on the table, and roared a toast,
"God send this Crum-well-down !"

Till on a sudden fire-bells rang,
And the troopers sprang to horse ;
The eldest muttered between his teeth,
Hot curses—deep and coarse.
In their stirrup cups they flung the crusts,
And cried as they spurred through the town,
With their keen swords drawn and their pistols cocked,
"God send this Crum-well-down !"

Away they dashed through Temple Bar,
Their red cloaks flowing free,
Their scabbards clashed, each back-piece shone—
None liked to touch the three.
The silver cups that held the crusts
They flung to the startled town,
Shouting again, with a blaze of swords,
"God send this Crum-well-down !"

II.—THE JACOBITES' CLUB.

ONE threw an orange in the air,
And caught it on his sword ;
Another crunched the yellow peel,
With his red heel on the board ;
A third man cried, "When Jackson comes
Into his large estate,
I'll pave the old hall down in Kent,
With golden bits of eight."

One turning with a meaning wink,
Fast double-locked the door,
Then held a letter to the fire—
It was all blank before,
But now it's ruled with crimson lines,
And cyphers odd and quaint ;
They cluster round, and nod, and laugh,
As one invokes a saint,

He pulls a black wig from his head ;
He's shaven like a priest ;
He holds his finger to his nose,
And smiles, "The wind blows east,
The Dutch canals are frozen, sirs ;
I don't say anything,
But when you play at ombre next,
Mind that I lead a king."

"Last night at Kensington I spent,
'Twas gay as any fair ;
Lord ! how they stared to find that bill
Stuck on the royal chair.
Some fools cried 'Treason !'—some, 'A plot !'
I slipped behind a screen,
And when the guards came fussing in,
Sat chatting with the Queen."

"I," cried a third, "was printing songs,
In a garret in St. Giles',
When I heard the watchman at the door,
And flew up on the tiles.
The press was lowered into the vault,
The types into a drain :
I think you'll own, my trusty sirs,
I have a ready brain."

A frightened whisper at the door,
A bell rings—then a shot :
“Shift, boys, the Orangers are come ;
Pity ! the punch is hot.”
A clash of swords—a shout—a scream,
And all abreast in force ;
The Jacobites, some twenty strong,
Break through and take to horse.

III.—THE WHITE ROSE OVER THE WATER.

(Edinburgh, 1744.)

THE old men sat with hats pulled down,
Their claret cups before them :
Broad shadows hid their sullen eyes,
The tavern lamps shone o’er them,
As a brimming bowl, with crystal fill’d,
Came borne by the landlord’s daughter,
Who wore in her bosom the fair white rose,
That grew best over the water.

Then all leap’d up, and join’d their hands
With hearty clasp and greeting,
The brimming cups, outstretched by all,
Over the wide bowl meeting.
“A health,” they cried, “to the witching eyes
Of Kate, the landlord’s daughter !
But don’t forget the white, white rose
That grows best over the water.”

Each other’s cups they touch’d all round,
The last red drop outpouring ;
Then with a cry that warmed the blood,
One heart-born chorus roaring—

“Let the glass go round, to pretty Kate,
The landlord’s black-eyed daughter.
But never forget the white, white rose
That grows best over the water.”

Then hats flew up and swords sprang out,
And lusty rang the chorus—
“Never,” they cried, “while Scots are Scots
And the broad Frith’s before us.”
A ruby ring the glasses shine
As they toast the landlord’s daughter,
Because she wore the white, white rose
That grew best over the water.

A poet cried, “Our thistle’s brave,
With all its stings and prickles;
The shamrock with its holy leaf
Is spar’d by Irish sickles.
But bumpers round, for what are these
To Kate, the landlord’s daughter,
Who wears at her bosom the rose as white
That grows best over the water?”

They dash’d the glasses at the wall,
No lip might touch them after;
The toast had sanctified the cups
That smashed against the rafter;
Their chairs thrown back, they up again
To toast the landlord’s daughter.
But never forgot the white, white rose
That grew best over the water.

HISTORICAL AND LEGENDARY BALLADS.

WALTER THORNBURY.

I.--THE OLD GRENADIER'S STORY.

(Told on a bench outside the Invalides.)

TWAS the day beside the Pyramids,
It seems but an hour ago,
That Kleber's Foot stood firm in squares,
Returning blow for blow.
The Mamelukes were tossing
Their standards to the sky,
When I heard a child's voice say, "My men,
Teach me the way to die !"

'Twas a little drummer, with his side
Torn terribly with shot ;
But still he feebly beat his drum,
As though the wound were not.
And when the Mamelukes' wild horse
Burst with a scream and cry,
He said, "O men of the Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die !"

"My mother has got other sons,
With stouter hearts than mine,
But none more ready blood for France
To pour out free as wine.
Yet still life's sweet," the brave lad moaned,
"Fair are this earth and sky ;
Then, comrades of the Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die !"

I saw Salenche, of the granite heart
Wiping his burning eyes—
It was by far more pitiful
Than mere loud sobs and cries :
One bit his cartridge till his lip
Grew black as winter sky,
But still the boy moaned, " Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die !"

O never saw I sight like that !
The sergeant flung down flag,
Even the fifer bound his brow
With a wet and bloody rag,
Then looked at locks and fixed their steel,
But never made reply,
Until he sobbed out once again,
" Teach me the way to die !"

Then, with a shout that flew to God,
They strode into the fray ;
I saw their red plumes join and wave,
But slowly melt away.
The last who went—a wounded man—
Bade the poor boy good-bye,
And said, " We men of the Forty-third
Teach you the way to die !"

I never saw so sad a look
As the poor youngster cast,
When the hot smoke of cannon
In cloud and whirlwind pass'd.
Earth shook, and Heaven answered :
I watched his eagle eye,
As he faintly moaned, " The Forty-third
Teach me the way to die !"

Then, with a musket for a crutch,
He leaped into the fight ;
I, with a bullet in my hip,
Had neither strength nor might,
But, proudly beating on his drum,
A fever in his eye,
I heard him moan, " The Forty-third
Taught me the way to die ! "

They found him on the morrow,
Stretch'd on a heap of dead ;
His hand was in the grenadier's
Who at his bidding bled.
They hung a medal round his neck,
And closed his dauntless eye ;
On the stone they cut, " The Forty-third
Taught him the way to die ! "

'Tis forty years from then till now—
The grave gapes at my feet—
Yet when I think of such a boy
I feel my old heart beat.
And from my sleep I sometimes wake,
Hearing a feeble cry,
And a voice that says, " Now, Forty-third,
Teach me the way to die ! "

II.—THE RIDING TO THE TOURNAMENT.

OVER meadows purple-flowered,
Through the dark lanes oak-embowered
Over commons dry and brown,
Through the silent red-roofed town,
Past the reapers and the sheaves,
Over white roads strewn with leaves,
By the gipsy's ragged tent,
Rode we to the Tournament.

Over clover wet with dew,
Whence the sky-lark, startled, flew,
Through brown fallows, where the hare
Leapt up from its subtle lair,
Past the mill-stream and the reeds
Where the stately heron feeds,
By the warren's sunny wall,
Where the dry leaves shake and fall
By the hall's ancestral trees,
Bent and writhing in the breeze,
Rode we all with one intent,
Gaily to the Tournament.

Golden sparkles, flashing gem,
Lit the robes of each of them,
Cloak of velvet, robe of silk,
Mantle snowy-white as milk,
Rings upon our bridle hand,
Jewels on our belt and band,
Bells upon our golden reins,
Tinkling spurs and shining chains—
In such merry mob we went
Riding to the Tournament.

Laughing voices, scraps of song,
Lusty music loud and strong,
Rustling of the banners blowing,
Whispers as of rivers flowing,
Whistle of the hawks we bore
As they rise and as they soar,
Now and then a clash of drums
As the rabble louder hums,
Now and then a burst of horns
Sounding over brooks and bourns,
As in merry guise we went
Riding to the Tournament.

There were abbots fat and sleek,
Nuns in couples, pale and meek,
Jugglers tossing cups and knives,
Yeomen with their buxom wives,
Pages playing with the curls
Of the rosy village girls,
Grizzly knights with faces scarred,
Staring through their visors barred,
Huntsmen cheering with a shout
At the wild stag breaking out,
Harper, stately as a king,
Touching now and then a string,
As our revel laughing went
To the solemn Tournament.

Charger with the massy chest,
Foam-spots flecking mane and breast,
Pacing stately, pawing ground,
Fretting for the trumpet's sound,
White and sorrel, roan and bay,

Dappled, spotted, black, and grey,
Palfreys snowy as the dawn,
Ponies sallow as the fawn,
All together neighing went
Trampling to the Tournament.

Long hair scattered in the wind,
Curls that flew a yard behind,
Flags that struggled like a bird
Chained and restive—not a word
But half buried in a laugh ;
And the lance's gilded staff
Shaking when the bearer shook
At the jester's merry look,
As he grins upon his mule,
Like an urchin leaving school,
Shaking bauble, tossing bells,—
At the merry jest he tells,—
So in happy mood we went,
Laughing to the Tournament.

What a bustle at the inn,
What a stir, without—within ;
Filling flagons, brimming bowls
For a hundred thirsty souls ;
Froth in snow-flakes flowing down,
From the pitcher big and brown,
While the tankards brim and bubble
With the balm for human trouble ;
How the maiden coyly sips,
How the yeoman wipes his lips,
How the old knight drains the cup

Slowly and with calmness up,
And the abbot, with a prayer,
Fills the silver goblet rare,
Praying to the saints for strength
As he holds it at arm's length ;
How the jester spins the bowl
On his thumb, then quaffs the whole ;
How the pompous steward bends
And bows to half-a-dozen friends,
As in a thirsty mood we went
Dusty to the Tournament.

Then again the country over
Through the stubble and the clover,
By the crystal-dropping springs,
Where the road-dust clogs and clings
To the pearl-leaf of the rose,
Where the tawdry nightshade blows,
And the bramble twines its chains
Through the sunny village lanes,
Where the thistle sheds its seed,
And the goldfinch loves to feed,
By the milestone green with moss,
By the broken wayside cross,
In a merry band we went
Shouting to the Tournament.

Pilgrims with their hood and cowl,
Pursy burghers cheek by jowl,
Archers with their peacock's wing
Fitting to the waxen string,
Pedlars with their pack and bags,
Beggars with their coloured rags,

Silent monks, whose stony eyes
Rest in trance upon the skies,
Children sleeping at the breast,
Merchants from the distant West,
All in gay confusion went
To the royal Tournament.

Players with the painted face
And a drunken man's grimace,
Grooms who praise their raw-boned steeds,
Old wives telling maple beads,—
Blackbirds from the hedges broke,
Black crows from the beeches croak,
Glossy swallows in dismay
From the mill-stream fled away,
The angry swan, with ruffled breast,
Frowned upon her osier nest,
The wren hopped restless on the brake,
The otter makes the sedges shake,
The butterfly before our rout
Flew like a blossom blown about,
The coloured leaves, a globe of life,
Spun round and scattered as in strife,
Sweeping down the narrow lane
Like the slant shower of the rain,
The lark in terror, from the sod,
Flew up and straight appealed to God,
As a noisy band we went
Trotting to the Tournament.

But when we saw the holy town,
With its river and its down,
Then the drums began to beat
And the flutes piped mellow sweet ;

Then the deep and full bassoon
Murmured like a wood in June,
And the fifes, so sharp and bleak
All at once began to speak.
Hear the trumpets clear and loud,
Full-tongued, eloquent, and proud,
And the dulcimer that ranges
Through such wild and plaintive changes ;
Merry sound the jester's shawm,
To our gladness giving form ;
And the shepherd's chalumeau,
Rich and soft, and sad and low ;
Hark ! the bagpipes squeak and groan, —
Every herdsman has his own ;
So in measured step we went
Pacing to the Tournament.

All at once the chimes break out,
Then we hear the townsmen shout,
And the morris-dancers' bells
Tinkling in the grassy dells ;
The bell thunder from the tower
Adds its sound of doom and power,
As the cannon's loud salute
For a moment made us mute,
Then again the laugh and joke
On the startled silence broke ;
Thus in merry mood we went
Laughing to the Tournament.

III.—THE COURT HISTORIAN.

LOWER EMPIRE. CIRCA 700 A.D.

THE Monk Arnulphus uncorked his ink
That shone with a blood-red light,
Just as the sun began to sink ;
His vellum was pumiced a silvery white :
“The Basileus”—for so he began—
“Is a royal sagacious Mars of a man,
Than the very lion bolder ;
He has married the stately widow of Thrace”—
“Hush !” cried a voice at his shoulder.

His palette gleamed with a burnished green,
Bright as a dragon-fly’s skin ;
His gold-leaf shone like the robe of a queen,
His azure glowed as a cloud worn thin,
Deep as the blue of the king-whale’s lair :
“The Porphyrogenita Zoe the fair
Is about to wed with a prince much older,
Of an unpropitious mien and look”—
“Hush !” cried a voice at his shoulder.

The red flowers trellised the parchment page,
The birds leaped up on the spray,
The yellow fruit swayed and drooped and swung,
It was Autumn mixed up with May
(O but his cheek was shrivelled and shrunk !)
“The child of the Basileus,” wrote the Monk,
“Is golden-haired, tender the queen’s arms fold her
Her step-mother Zoe doth love her so”—
“Hush !” cried a voice at his shoulder,

The kings and martyrs and saints and priests
All gathered to guard the text :
There was Daniel snug in the lions' den,
Singing no whit perplexed ;
Brazen Samson with spear and helm :—
“ The Queen,” wrote the Monk, “ rules firm the realm,
For the King gets older and older ;
The Norseman Thorkill is brave and fair ”—
“ Hush ! ” cried a voice at his shoulder.

MISCELLANEOUS.

WALTER THORNBURY.

SMITH OF MAUDLIN.

MY chums will burn their Indian weeds
The very night I pass away,
And cloud-propelling puff and puff
As white the thin smoke melts away ;
Then Jones of Wadham, eyes half-closed,
Rubbing the ten hairs on his chin,
Will say, " This very pipe I use
Was poor old Smith's of Maudlin."

That night in High Street there will walk
The ruffling gownsmen three abreast,
The stiff-necked proctors, wary-eyed,
The dons, the coaches, and the rest ;
Sly " Cherub Sims " will then propose
Billiards, or some sweet ivory sin ;
Tom cries, " He played a pretty game—
Did honest Smith of Maudlin."

The boats are out !—the arrowy rush,
The mad bull's jerk, the tiger's strength ;
The Balliol men have wopped the Queen's—
Hurrah ! but only by a length.
Dig on ye muffs, ye cripples dig !
Pull blind, till crimson sweats the skin ;—
The man who bobs and steers cries, " Oh
For plucky Smith of Maudlin."

Wine parties met—a noisy night,
Red sparks are breaking through the cloud ;
The man who won the silver cup
Is in the chair erect and proud ;

Three are asleep—one to himself
Sings "Yellow jacket's sure to win."
A silence:—"Men, the memory
Of poor old Smith of Maudlin!"

The boxing-rooms—with solemn air
A freshman dons the swollen glove;
With slicing strokes the lapping sticks
Work out a rubber—three and love;
With rasping jar the padded man
Whips Thompson's foil so square and thin,
And cries, "Why zur, you've not the wrist
Of Muster Smith of Maudlin."

But all this time beneath the sheet
I shall lie still, and free from pain,
Hearing the bed-makers sluff in
To gossip round the blinded pane;
Try on my rings, sniff up my scent,
Feel in my pockets for my tin;
While one hag says, "We all must die,
Just like this Smith of Maudlin."

Ah! then a dreadful hush will come,
And all I hear will be the fly
Buzzing impatient round the wall,
And on the sheet where I must lie;
Next day a jostling of feet—
The men who bring the coffee in:
"This is the door—the third pair back.
Here's Mr. Smith of Maudlin."

Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

1828—1882.

IT was in the spring of 1882 that we buried Rossetti in the little churchyard at Birchington-on-Sea. Whether his real hold of the world is greater now than it was then, is perhaps open to doubt. Certainly the weight of his name in literary criticism has increased. No reviewer would now speak of him as a "secondary" or perhaps "minor" poet. That was what the *Spectator* did a few months before his death. No "summary" of the year's literature would ignore either of his two volumes if they were published for the first time to-day. That was what the *Daily News* did in effect in 1881. No leading review would overlook a book like "Ballads and Sonnets." That was what the *Saturday Review* did at the time the book appeared. I am not reproaching these journals, but merely stating facts that were known to Rossetti and even felt by him. The critical recognition of Rossetti's genius is now full and generous even where it was once meagre and grudging; but whether the actual influence of his poetry on the world is much greater than it was when he died is not very certain. His position as a painter is at once the same and different. Twenty years ago his pictures were written about very much and very often. They were known only to a small circle, but that circle was a vocal one, and

it praised them loudly. Now they are known to a large public, and though warmly extolled by the few, much general eulogy seems disvoiced. Concerning Rossetti's character as a man a similar change of estimate seems to have been brought about. There was once a very real fascination in the thought of this man who had lived a solitary life and become eminent in two arts, but this seems to have given place to a languid and rather morbid interest. It may be that Rossetti has therein suffered at the hands of his friends, of whom (it is my pride to remember) I was one. With the best intentions they seem in some instances to have smoothed and softened him out of all individuality. His generosity has become childish, his appreciativeness effeminate, and his purity womanish. All this is the determined, natural, and very commendable protest against the evil reports which were in circulation about the time that his first volume was published. But just as it had been wrong and infamous to say what was then said of the author of "Poems," so it is wrong and foolish to say what is now said of the author of "Ballads and Sonnets." Both have been ideal portraits and both bad ideals, the one on the side of uncharitableness, the other on that of unwise generosity. The true Rossetti was far from being either an angel or a devil. He was a man of very complex character, the most complete amalgam of good and bad, strong and weak, that I have ever yet met or expect to meet. In that strange complexity he was profoundly interesting. He was the most distinctive, the most original, the most absorbing of men. Let his life's story be told in all simplicity, fidelity and truth, and the public interest

in it will not fail. It never yet has been told, and perhaps the ear of the public could only be caught at too great a sacrifice of the cherished and more harmless ideal.

All that it is right to say here is easily said. Rossetti was the son of an Italian refugee, who was himself a poet, a scholar, a noteworthy critic of Dante, and a politician of some mark in his own country. His mother was a relative of the Dr. Polidori who was for a short time associated with Byron. One of his sisters, Christina, has become famous as an English poet, and his brother, William Michael, is an accomplished critic of literature and the fine arts. Rossetti himself, whose baptismal name was Gabriel Charles Dante, was born in London in 1828, and educated with a view to the calling of a painter. That calling he followed down to his death with financial and artistic success. Early in life he adopted the name Dante Gabriel Rossetti, by which he has since been known. His deepest aims were those of a poet, and his poetic career began early. Almost the whole contents of the volume entitled "Poems" were the work of his first twenty-five years. The principal contents of his second volume "Ballads and Sonnets" (1881) were the product of many subsequent years, including the year of its publication. His prose writings are few and, except in one instance, "Hand and Soul," not important. He made a large, full and very noble translation of the sonnets of the early Italian poets into English verse. His work as a painter was no less various. Two of his pictures are now in the National Gallery, and one of them is in the public gallery at Liverpool.

Many of the friends of his early manhood afterwards became eminent in their various walks of life. Among painters there were—Holman Hunt, Millais, and Burne-Jones ; among poets, Swinburne, William Morris, Canon Dixon, and George Meredith. With the former group, together with Mr. Thomas Woolner the sculptor, and others, he established an artistic “movement,” which annexed the cant name of “the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.” Of this group in those days Rossetti was undoubtedly the head and centre. His poetic sympathy with the other group, and perhaps his influence upon them in early years was large, and it has been generously acknowledged.

Though he lived to be fifty-four years of age, and was known to be a man of transcendent talents, he was never at any time very prominent in the eye of the world, and this was due in part to a great indifference to current topics of interest. Feeling the “momentary momentousness” of many political questions, he took no side in politics, and the questions that agitated the worlds of art and literature troubled him almost as little. He was capable of a vital interest in occasional events of sensational interest, such as a great criminal trial, but on the whole the life of the world in which he lived passed him by unobserved. The one moment at which he played his part among men was that in which he was forced to do so by an attack of a brother-poet, whose subsequent apology may well wipe out his offence. This was the article on “The Fleshly School of Poetry,” which Mr. Robert Buchanan in 1871 contributed, under a pseudonym, to the *Contemporary Review*. Rossetti’s reply to

this article published in the *Athenæum* under the title, "The Stealthy School of Criticism," has been reprinted in his collected works.

His domestic life, meantime, was more full of incident than it would be easy to indicate. He married in 1860 Elizabeth Eleanor Siddal, a young, beautiful and gifted girl, who died two years later having given birth to a stillborn child. Her death, owing to the circumstances attending it, was a shock from which he never entirely recovered. In her coffin he buried the manuscript of the poems which had in part been inspired by and addressed to her. About fourteen years afterwards he permitted these poems to be exhumed and published. His life for the twenty years, or thereabouts, succeeding his wife's death was mainly that of a recluse. He removed from No. 14, Chatham Place, Blackfriars, where he had spent his married life, to a gloomy house No. 16, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, which for a time he shared with Mr. Swinburne, Mr. George Meredith, and his brother William. Rossetti continued to reside at Cheyne Walk until his death in 1882, though he spent some time at intervals at Kelmscot Manor House, not far from Lechlade, in Oxfordshire, which he shared with Mr. William Morris and his family. Meantime, owing to insomnia and other causes, he had contracted the habit of taking chloral. The dominion of this pernicious drug led to delusions of a painful kind, and his last years were overcast by much unhappiness; but his strength as a poet and painter never at any time forsook him. In this period of darkness his close friend was Theodore Watts. I witnessed Mr. Watts's devotion to Rossetti, and know that it was brotherly. Mr. William

Rossetti, in a preface to his brother's works, has offered a generous tribute to the intellectual companionship and incessant assiduity of this most noble friendship. Frederick Shields, Madox Brown, W. Bell Scott, William Sharp (author of his "Record"), Dr. Westland Marston and Philip Marston, Mr. Joseph Knight (his able biographer), and, of course, W. M. Rossetti were among those who helped to cheer Rossetti in those dark days. He had several valued correspondents also, among whom were Mr. Gosse, Canon Dixon, and Mr. William Davis. He died on Easter Day 1882.

Though Italian by blood, Rossetti was very much of an Englishman to look upon. He was of medium height, slightly inclined to corpulence, had a noble head (a little like Shakespeare's), and a face that was languid in repose but could light up with great fire. His voice was a full and deep baritone, and he could use it with wonderful effect. His humour was somewhat boisterous, and he could make a good story tell. His reading in poetry was very large, but in prose fiction almost confined to the novels of Dumas and Hugo, Fielding and Richardson. He was an ardent and most learned Shakespearean. His memory was amazing, and he could recite more verse than any six men I have ever encountered. His general reading was very small, and his knowledge of the countless walks of intellectual activity outside poetry and romance much less than one would have expected. He was open-handed in money affairs, but by no means unselfish of personal comfort. In his literary character, he was generous towards the young and unassisted, but jealous enough towards his equals and his rivals. His

literary rivalry, however, never carried him to the length of writing against any man, however strongly he might sometimes talk. He knew his own measure, and would let no one understate it.

Such was Rossetti as he appeared to me. I am conscious of no sins of commission in what I have set down, but must plead guilty to not a few sins of omission. The responsibility of telling the world truly and fully what manner of man Rossetti was shall not be mine. Nevertheless, I am sure that on the whole Rossetti would gain by the revelation. Looking back upon him over the interval since his death, with all painful feelings softened out, and nothing left to think of but the man as he lived, I seem to see him as a vivid personality, irresistible in his fascination, powerful even in his weakness, and with such light and force of genius as I have never encountered in any one else whatever. Perhaps I do not now, as I did before, find him among the very greatest poets. "Jenny" is not a "sermon" to me as it used to be, because I miss the true ring of real human sympathy with the fallen girl, and see the cold artistic interest in a picturesque bit of humanity. The imagination of "The Blessed Damozel" too often seems a trick of fancy, and the larger vision does not always appear in "The Burden of Nineveh." In the sonnets I find less than my old delight in phrases that roll on the tongue "like delicious wine," and more than my former dread of the excess of emphasis which robs the work of simplicity and natural dignity. Above everything, I am nearly always conscious of the presence of the great artist, and hardly ever of the prophet. I do not see the end, the aim, the outcome of much of

this verse apart from mere joy in it because it is beautiful, though truly that may very well be enough. But I trust I shall never fail in love of the sublime poetic insight and noble dramatic humanity of "The King's Tragedy" and "The White Ship." Here, in my view, and in such sonnets as that of "The Last Three at Trafalgar," and "Lost Days," the great genius of Rossetti reaches its highest point. And it is not unworthy of mention that three of these four most noble poems were among the last products of his wonderful pen.

HALL CAINE.

POEMS.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

I.—"THE WHITE SHIP."

HENRY I. OF ENGLAND.

November 25th, 1120.

BY none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(*Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.*)

'Twas a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.
(*The sea hath no King but God alone.*)

King Henry held it as life's whole gain,
That after his death his son should reign.

'Twas so in my youth, I heard men say,
And my old age calls it back to-day.

King Henry of England's realm was he,
And Henry Duke of Normandy.

The times had changed when on either coast
"Clerkly Harry" was all his boast.

Of ruthless strokes full many an one
He had struck to crown himself and his son;
And his elder brother's eyes were gone.

And when to the chase his court would crowd,
The poor flung ploughshares on his road,
And shrieked, "Our cry is from King to God!"

But all the chiefs of the English land
Had knelt and kissed the Prince's hand.

And next with his son he sailed to France
To claim the Norman allegiance.

And every Baron in Normandy
Had taken the oath of fealty.

'Twas sworn and sealed, and the day had come
When the King and the Prince might journey home.
For Christmas cheer is to home hearts dear,
And Christmas now was drawing near.

Stout Fitz-Stephen came to the King,—
A Pilot famous in seafaring ;

And he held to the King, in all men's sight
A mark of gold for his tributes right.

"Liege Lord ! my father guided the ship
From whose boat your father's foot did slip
When he caught the English soil in his grip,

"And cried : ' By this clasp I claim command
Or every rood of English land.'

"He was borne to the realm you rule o'er now
In that ship with the archer carved at her prow.

"And thither I'll bear, an it be my due
Your father's son and his grandson too.

"The famed White Ship is mine in the bay
From Harfleur's harbour she sails to-day,

"With masts fair pennoned as Norman spears
And with fifty well-tried mariners."

Quoth the King : " My ships are chosen each one,
But I'll not say nay to Stephen's son.

" My son and daughter and fellowship
Shall cross the water in the White Ship."

The King set sail with the eve's south wind,
And soon he left that coast behind,

The Prince and all his, a princely show
Remained in the good White Ship to go.

With noble knights and with ladies fair,
With courtiers and sailors gathered there
Three hundred living souls we were :

And I, Berold, was the meanest hind
In all that train to the Prince assign'd.

The Prince was a lawless, shameless youth ;
From his father's loins he sprang without ruth :

Eighteen years till then he had seen
And the devil's dues in him were eighteen.

And now he cried : " Bring wine from below ;
Let the sailors revel ere yet they row :

" Our speed shall o'ertake my father's flight
Though we sail from the harbour at midnight."

The rowers made good cheer without check
The lords and ladies obeyed his beck ;
The night was light, and they danced on the deck.

But at midnight's stroke they cleared the bay,
And the White Ship furrowed the water-way.

The sails were set, and the oars kept tune,
To the double flight of the ship and the moon.

Swifter and swifter the White Ship sped
Till she flew as the spirit flies from the dead :

As white as a lily glimmered she
Like a ship's fair ghost upon the sea.

And the Prince cried, " Friends, 'tis the hour to sing !
Is a song-bird's course so swift on the wing ? "

And under the winter stars' still throng,
From brown throats, white throats, merry and
strong,
The knights and the ladies raised a song.
A song,—nay, a shriek that rent the sky,
That leaped o'er the deep!—the grievous cry
Of three hundred living that now must die.
An instant shriek that sprang to the shock
As the ship's keel felt the sunken rock.
'Tis said that afar—a shrill strange sigh—
The king's ships heard it and knew not why.
Pale Fitz-Stephen stood by the helm
'Mid all those folks that the waves must whelm.
A great King's heir for the waves to whelm,
And the helpless pilot pale at the helm!
The ship was eager and sucked athirst,
By the stealthy stab of the sharp reef pierc'd:
And like the moil round a sinking cup
The waters against her crowded up.
A moment the pilot's senses spin,—
The next he snatched the Prince 'mid the din,
Cut the boat loose and the youth leapt in.
A few friends leapt with him, standing near,
"Row, the sea is smooth and the night is clear!"
"What none to be saved but these and I?"
Row, row as you'd live! All here must die."
Out of the churn of the choking ship,
Which the gulf grapples and the waves strip,
They struck with the strained oars' flash and dip.
'Twas then o'er the splitting bulwarks' brim
The Prince's sister screamed to him.

He gazed aloft still rowing apace
And through the whirled surf he knew her face.
To the toppling decks clave one and all
As a fly cleaves to a chamber wall.
I, Berold, was clinging anear ;
I prayed for myself and quaked with fear,
But I saw his eyes as he looked at her.
He knew her face and he heard her cry,
And he said, " Put back ! she must not die ! "
And back with the current's force they reel
Like a leaf that's drawn to a water wheel.
'Ncath the ship's travail they scarce might float,
But he rose and stood in the rocking boat.
Low the poor ship leaned on the tide,
O'er the naked keel as she best might slide,
The sister toiled to the brother's side.
He reached an oar to her from below
And stiffened his arms to clutch her so.
But now from the ship some spied the boat,
And " saved ! " was the cry from many a throat.
And down to the boat they leapt and fell :
It turned as a bucket turns in a well
And nothing was there but the surge and swell.
The Prince that was and the King to come,
There in an instant gone to his doom.
Despite of all England's bended knee
And maugre the Norman fealty !
He was a Prince of lust and pride ;
He showed no grace till the hour he died.
When he should be king, he oft would vow,

He'd yoke the peasant to his own plough.
O'er him the ships score their furrows now.

God only knows where his soul did wake,
But I saw him die for his sister's sake.

By none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.

(Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.)

'Twas a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.

(The sea hath no King but God alone.)

And now the end came o'er the waters' womb
Like the last great day that's yet to come.

With prayers in vain and curses in vain,
The White Ship sundered on the mid-main:

And what were men and what was a ship
Were toys and splinters in the sea's grip.

I, Berold, was down in the sea;
And passing strange though the thing may be,
Of dreams then known I remember me.

Blithe is the shout on Harfleur's strand
When morning lights the sails to land:

And blithe is Honfleur's echoing gloam
When mothers call the children home:

And high do the bells of Rouen beat
When the Body of Christ goes down the street.

These things and the like were heard and shown
In a moment's trance 'neath the sea alone;

And when I rose, 'twas the sea did seem,
And not these things, to be all a dream.

The ship was gone and the crowd was gone,
And the deep shuddered and the moon shone,

And in a strait grasp my arms did span
The mainyard rent from the mast where it ran ;
And on it with me was another man.

Where lands were none 'neath the dim sea-sky,
We told our names that man and I.

"O, I am Godefroy de l'Aigle hight,
And son I am to a belted knight."

"And I am Berold the butcher's son
Who slays the beasts in Rouen town."

Then cried we upon God's name as we
Did drift on the bitter winter sea.

But lo ! a third man rose o'er the wave,
And we said, "Thank God ! us three may He save !"

He clutched to the yard with panting stare,
And we looked and knew Fitz-Stephen there.

He clung, and "What of the Prince ?" quoth he,
"Lost, lost !" we cried. He cried, "Woe on me !"
And loosed his hold and sank through the sea.

And soul with soul again in that space
We two were together face to face :

And each knew each as the moments sped,
Less for one living than for one dead :

And every still star overhead
Seemed an eye that knew we were but dead.

And the hours passed ; till the noble's son
Sighed, "God be thy help ! my strength's foredone !

"O farewell, friend, for I can no more !"
"Christ take thee !" I moaned ; and his life was o'er.

Three hundred souls were all lost but one
And I drifted over the sea alone.

At last the morning rose on the sea
Like an angel's wing that beat towards me.

Sore numbed I was in my sheepskin coat ;
Half dead I hung, and might nothing note,
Till I woke sun-warmed in a fisher-boat.

The sun was high o'er the eastern brim
As I praised God and gave thanks to Him.

That day I told my tale to a priest,
Who charged me, till the shift were releas'd,
That I should keep it in mine own breast.

And with the priest I thence did fare
To King Henry's court at Winchester.

We spoke with the King's high chamberlain,
And he wept and mourned again and again,
As if his own son had been slain :

And round us ever there crowded fast
Great men with faces all aghast :

And who so bold that might tell the thing
Which now they knew to their lord the King ?
Much woe I learnt in their communing.

The King had watched with a heart sore stirred
For two whole days, and this was the third :

And still to all his court would he say,
"What keeps my son so long away ?"

And they said : "The ports lie far and wide
That skirt the swell of the English tide ;

"And England's cliffs are not more white
Than her women are, and scarce so light
Her skies as their eyes are blue and bright ;

"And in some port that he reached from France
The Prince has lingered for his pleasure."

But once the King asked : " What distant cry
Was that we heard 'twixt sea and sky ? "

And one said : " With suchlike shouts, pardie !
Do the fishers fling their nets at sea."

And one : " Who knows not the shrieking quest
When the sea-mew misses its young from the nest ? "

'Twas thus till now they had soothed his dread,
Albeit they knew not what they said :

But who should speak to-day of the thing
That all knew there except the King ?

Then pondering much they found a way,
And met round the King's high seat that day :

And the King set with a heart sore stirred
And seldom he spoke and seldom heard.

'Twas then through the hall the King was ware
Of a little boy with golden hair,

As bright as the golden poppy is
That the beach breeds for the surf to kiss :

Yet pale his cheek as the thorn in Spring,
And his garb black like the raven's wing.

Nothing heard but his foot through the hall,
For now the lords were silent all.

And the King wondered, and said, " Alack
Who sends me a fair boy dressed in black ?

" Why, sweet heart do you pace through the hall
As though my court were a funeral ? "

Then lowly knelt the child at the dais,
And looked up weeping in the King's face.

" O wherefore black, O King, ye may say,
For white is the hue of death to-day.

“Your son and all his fellowship
Lie now in the sea with the White Ship.”
King Henry fell as a man struck dead ;
And speechless still he stared from his bed,
When to him next day my rede I read.
There’s many an hour must needs beguile
A King’s high heart that he should smile,—
Full many a lordly hour, full fain
Of his realm’s rule and pride of his reign :—
But this King never smiled again.
By none but me can the tale be told,
The butcher of Rouen, poor Berold.
(Lands are swayed by a King on a throne.)
’Twas a royal train put forth to sea,
Yet the tale can be told by none but me.
(The sea hath no King but God alone.)

II.—THE BLESSED DAMOZEL.

THE blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of heaven ;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even ;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.
Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary’s gift
For service meetly worn ;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.
Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God’s choristers ;
The wonder was not yet quite gone

From that still look of hers
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years,
. . . Yet now and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing : the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on ;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is space begun ;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge,
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart remembered names ;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm ;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm,

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce
Its path ; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now ; the curled moon
Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf ; and now
She spoke through the still weather,
Her voice was like the voice the stars
Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet ! even now, in that bird's song,
Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened ? When those bells
Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
Down all the echoing stair ?)

' I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come,' she said.
' Have I not prayed in heaven ?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd ?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength ?
And shall I feel afraid ?

' When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light ;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God's sight.

' We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually

With prayer sent up to God ;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

‘ We two will lie i’ the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His name audibly.

‘ And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here ; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.’

(Alas ! We two, we two, thou say’st !
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee ?)

‘ We two,’ she said, ‘ will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

‘ Cirelewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded ;
Into the fine cloth, white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,

To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

‘He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :

Then will I lay my cheek

To his, and tell about our love,

Not once abashed or weak :

And the dear mother will approve

My pride, and let me speak.

‘Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,

To him round whom all souls

Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads

Bowed with their aureoles :

And angels meeting us shall sing

To their citherns and citoles.

‘There will I ask of Christ the Lord

Thus much for him and me :—

Only to live as once on earth

With Love,—only to be,

As then awhile, for ever now

Together, I and he.’

She gazed and listened and then said,

Less sad of speech than mild,—

All this is when he comes.’ She ceased.

The light thrilled towards her, fill’d

With angels in strong level flight,

Her eyes prayed, and she smil’d.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path

Was vague in distant spheres :

And then she cast her arms along

The golden barriers,

And laid her face between her hands

And wept. (I heard her tears.)

SONNETS.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

I.—LOVESIGHT.

WHEN do I see the most beloved one ?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face their altar, solemnise
The worship of that Love through thee made known ?
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only sees thy soul its own ?
O love, my love ! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing ?

II.—TRUE WOMAN.

I. HERSELF.

TO be a sweetness more desired than Spring ;
A bodily beauty more acceptable
Than the wild-rose tree's arch that crowns the fell ;
To be an essence more environing
Than wine's drained juice ; a music ravishing
More than the passionate pulse of Philomel ;—
To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's swell
That is the flower of life :—how strange a thing !
How strange a thing to be what Man can know
But as a sacred secret ! Heaven's own screen
Hides her soul's purest depth and loveliest glow ;
Closely withheld, as all things most unseen,—
The wave-bowered pearl,—the heart-shaped seal of green
That flecks the snowdrop underneath the snow.

III.—TRUE WOMAN.

2. HER LOVE.

SHE loves him ; for her infinite soul is Love,
And he her lodestar. Passion in her is
A glass facing his fire, where the bright bliss
Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet move
That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to prove,
And it shall turn, by instant contraries,
Ice to the moon ; while her pure fire to his
For whom it burns, clings close i' the heart's alcove.

Lo ! they are one. With wifely breast to breast
And circling arms, she welcomes all command
Of love,—her soul to answering ardours fann'd :
Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to rest,
Ah ! who shall say she deems not loveliest
The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand ?

IV.—BARREN SPRING.

ONCE more the changed year's turning wheel returns :
And as a girl sails balanced in the wind,
And now before and now again behind
Stoops as it swoops, with cheek that laughs and burns,—
So Spring comes merry towards me here, but earns
No answering smile from me, whose life is twin'd
With the dead boughs that winter still must bind,
And whom to-day the Spring no more concerns.

Behold, this crocus is a withering flame ;
This snowdrop, snow ; this apple-blossom's part
To breed the fruit that breeds the serpent's art.
Nay, for these Spring-flowers, turn thy face from them,
Nor stay till on the year's last lily-stem
The white cup shrivels round the golden heart.

V.—VAIN VIRTUES.

WHAT is the sorriest thing that enters Hell?
None of the sins,—but this and that fair deed
Which a soul's sin at length could supersede.
These yet are virgins, whom death's timely knell
Might once have sainted; whom the fiends compel
Together now, in snake-bound shuddering sheaves
Of anguish, while the pit's pollution leaves
Their refuse maidenhood abominable.

Night sucks them down, the tribute of the pit,
Whose names, half entered in the Book of Life,
Were God's desire at noon. And as their hair
And eyes sink last, the Torturer deigns no whit
To gaze, but, yearning, waits his destined wife,
The Sin still blithe on earth that sent them there.

VI.—LOST DAYS.

THE lost days of my life until to-day,
What were they could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The undying throats of Hell, athirst away?

I do not see them here; but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath.
“I am thyself,—what hast thou done to me?”
“And I— and I—thyself,” (lo! each one saith,)
“And thou thyself to all eternity!”

VII.—WINTER.

HOW large that thrush looks on the bare thorn-tree !
A swarm of such, three little months ago,
Had hidden in the leaves and let none know
Save by the outburst of their minstrelsy.
A white flake here and there—a snow-lily
Of last night's frost—our naked flower-beds hold ;
And for a rose-flower on the darkling mould
The hungry redbreast gleams. No bloom, no bee.

The current shudders to its ice-bound sedge :
Nipped in their bath, the stark reeds one by one
Flash each its clinging diamond in the sun :
Neath winds which for this winter's sovereign pledge
Shall curb great king-masts to the ocean's edge
And leave memorial forest kings o'erthrown.

VIII.—SPRING.

SOFT-LITTERED is the new-year's lambing-fold,
And in the hollowed haystack at its side
The shepherd lies o' nights now, wakeful-eyed
At the ewes' travailing call through the dark cold.
The young rooks cheep 'mid the thick caw o' the old :
And near unpeopled stream-sides, on the ground,
By her Spring cry the moorhen's nest is found,
Where the drained flood-lands flaunt their marigold.

Chill are the gusts to which the pastures cower,
And chill the current where the young reeds stand
As green and close as the young wheat on land :
Yet here the euckoo and the cuckoo-flower
Plight to the heart Spring's perfect imminent hour
Whose breath shall sooth you like your dear one's hand.

Alexander Smith.

1829—1867.

ALEXANDER SMITH—the author of “The Life Drama,” which created a great sensation on its publication—was born of hard-working parents at Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, on December 31st, 1829. He was the eldest child. A few years after his birth his parents removed to Paisley, and in a short time from there to Glasgow. He received a fair rudimentary education, and early showed such signs of ability, that it was proposed he should study for the Church—a thing that was found to be beyond the parents’ means. His father was a pattern-designer, and at an early age Alexander was set to learn his father’s craft; and at that he was engaged till he had become famous. But there is reason to believe that necessity, rather than choice, ruled in this matter; for Alexander Smith, after he got rid of pattern-designing, was never known to take a pencil in his hand. But as he drew his designs in these earlier days thoughts and fancies floated through his brain, and while yet a young man he had found expression for them in verse. By-and-by, several pieces were printed in the *Glasgow Citizen*, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) James Hedderwick speaking of them with the utmost favour. In 1851, Smith forwarded a selection of his pieces to Mr. George Gilfillan of Dundee, well known as a ready Mentor for young

poets. Through his influence, they soon began to appear in *The British Critic*, fragments from "The Life Drama" among them. These attracted much attention.

In 1852, "The Life Drama," in its completed form, was published by Mr. Bogue of London, who paid Smith £100 for it. Seldom has the work of a young man created such a *furor*. Scarce anything else was discussed then; and the charges of plagiarism that were raised only added to the demand for the work. The author was spoken of in the same breath with Tennyson and Keats even. Professor Aytoun parodied the poem, and literary journals kept up the excitement by publishing lists of alleged plagiarisms. Mr. P. P. Alexander, in an appendix to the volume entitled "Lost Leaves," has conclusively shown that what was proved against Smith could have been proved against any poet, however original; and he concludes by arguing that, "if the stuff was poetry, no amount of reading of former poets could have served to produce it." On his move from the pattern-designer's desk, Smith fell into editorship. For a time he conducted a weekly serial in Glasgow for Mr. R. Buchanan, the father of the poet Robert Buchanan. This, however, did not promise success; and when, in 1854, the post of secretary to the University of Edinburgh became vacant, Smith applied for it, and was successful. He was now in his true sphere—in a literary and learned atmosphere, and made the best use of his time. His salary was only £150; but he had some leisure which he was at liberty to employ on literary work. This he did: he contributed to newspapers and magazines many articles, and edited ballads and poetry. His edition

of Burns is one of the best ; but he had also, in association with Mr. Sidney Dobell, who had at this time gone to reside in Edinburgh, written "Sonnets on the (Crimean) War," which showed a great advance in workmanship. In 1857 he married a lady from Skye—Miss Flora MacDonald, and in the same year appeared "The City Poems," from the press of Messrs. Macmillan. His energies now seemed redoubled under the sense of responsibility, though "City Poems" proved a comparative failure. But he worked hard at "Edwin of Deira," having chosen a subject with some historical, or traditionary basis, in the hope of attaining more severity of outline, through substantial forms checking vagrancy and diffuseness to which he felt that he had a tendency. This was published in 1861. But though it was well received, a second edition having been soon called for, it did not excite anything like the attention "The Life Drama" had done ; and though the great part was written *before* the publication of Lord Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," it was not issued till *after* that work, and raised for Smith a very disadvantageous comparison. Smith now applied himself more and more to prose. "Dreamthorpe"—a book of essays, characterised by original thought and great charm of style—was published in 1873 ; and soon after, "Alfred Hagart's Household," a story which has much truthful delineation and many nice autobiographic touches, began to appear in *Good Words*. It was popular in the magazine, but is too long drawn out—the interest flags in the second part. Articles for newspapers, encyclopædias, magazines, followed in quick succession ; and he was meditating a great novel, when, in 1865, ill-health set in,

spoiling all his plans, and he died on January 5th, 1867, in his thirty-eighth year.

Smith's distinguishing characteristic is wealth of imagery, and a markedly youthful over-richness of language. "You scarce can see the grass for flowers." He did much to conquer his besetting fault, and to gain simplicity; but not with complete success. His tendency is to string fancies on a thread of thought too thin for the weight it bears. The sense is oppressed as with kaleidoscopic colours, and the main lines of plan are too little defined. In separate passages you meet with promise of strength, dramatic insight, and self-mastery; and in a few of his shorter poems,—*"Glasgow,"* for example—he is strong; but even in *"Edwin of Deira,"* his last large poetic work, and by far the most compacted, there are loose threads, evidences that the material has not been completely assimilated and mastered. Crude passages alternate with strong ones. You feel that the thing, as a whole, has not been fused and shapen glowing; but rather put together bit by bit, and with too much exercise of conscious ingenuity in spite of the wealth of imagery, and the warmth and glow of separate parts.

We lay little weight on the charges of plagiarism brought against *"The Life Drama."* In literature, and especially in poetry, there must be a large allowance of "give and take." All great poets are borrowers. The question is, whether in borrowing you elevate and stamp with your own mint-mark. In separate passages of beauty, suggestiveness, and powerful metre, Smith is very rich; and in *"The Life Drama"* as rich as anywhere. He understands the movement of blank verse, by which the accent is helped, at

the right point—particularly by the line ending with a broad open vowel-sound, and a sense of felicity and finality at once obtained.

Here is a selection of specimens :—

“ My drooping sails
Flap idly 'gainst the mast of my intent ;
I rot upon the waters when my prow
Should grate the golden isles.”

“ Although the ocean's inmost heart be pure,
Yet the salt fringe that daily licks the shore
Is gross with sand.”

“ The bridegroom sea
Is toying with the shore, his wedded bride,
And, *in the fulness of his marriage joy*,
He decorates her tawny brow with shells,
Retires a space, to see how well she looks,
Then proud, runs up to kiss her.”

“ I have that within,
Which urges me to utterance. I could accost
A pensive angel, singing to himself,
Upon a hill in heaven, and leave his mind
As dark and turbid as a trampled pool,
To purify at leisure.”

“ That largest Son of Time,
Who wandered singing through the listening world,
Will be as much forgot as the canoe
That crossed the bosom of a lonely lake
A thousand years ago.”

Or this, from “ The Boy's Poem ” :—

“ A sinking moon
Hung on one side, and filled the sheltered place
With gulfs of gloom, with floating shades, and threw
A ghostly glimmer on wet rock and pool.”

Or this, from “ Squire Maurice ” :—

“ A power that comes
On the instant, welching, like the light that smote
Saul from his horse.”

This is another from the closing part of "Edwin of Deira":—

"The sparrow flies
In at one door, and by another out,
Brief space of warm and comfortable air,
It knows in passing, then it vanishes
Into the gusty dark from whence it came.
The soul like that same sparrow comes and goes ;
This life is but a moment's sparrow-flight
Between the two unknowns of birth and death :
*An arrow's passage from an unknown bow
Toward an unknown bourne.*"

Smith's lyrical vein was fine. Indeed he has, in our idea, got but small credit for the point in which he was strongest. He has written some ballads of admirable quality—direct, strong, and clear. And in that very difficult form of composition, which may be described as a kind of cross between the ballad and the song, he has produced at least two most admirable specimens. Here is a powerful piece in this kind—the latter part of one of the lyrical interludes which do much to give relief and effect to "The Life Drama":—

"The Lady Blanche was saintly fair,
Not proud, but meek her look,
In her hazel eyes her thoughts lay clear
As pebbles in a brook.

Her father's veins ran noble blood,
His hall rose 'mid the trees ;
Like a sunbeam she came and went
'Mong the white cottages.

The peasants thanked her with their tears
When food and clothes were given,—
'This is a joy,' the lady said,
'Saints cannot taste in heaven.'

They met,—the poet told his love,
His hopes, despairs, and pains,—
The Lady with her calm eyes mocked
The tumult in his veins.

He passed away—a fierce song leapt
From cloud of his despair,
As lightning like a bright wild beast
Leaps from its thunder-lair.

He poured his frenzy forth in song,—
Bright heirs of tears and praises !
Now resteth that unquiet heart
Beneath the quiet daisies.

The world is old,—oh ! very old,—
The wild winds weep and rave ;
The world is old, and grey, and cold,
Let it drop into its grave."

Those who knew Smith intimately—among them, Sheriff A. Nicolson—speak of his great modesty and true self-appreciation. Professor Aytoun, in his "Firmilian" and elsewhere, had said some very cutting things, at which a thin-skinned man of the *genus irritabile*, might well have felt deep offence ; but Smith had not long been in Edinburgh before he and Aytoun were the best of friends. Aytoun, indeed, did Smith many substantial services, and was ever ready to speak well of him ; and Smith, on his part, was ready to recognise the exquisite humour of Aytoun's parody, and to laugh over it ; recognising the aptness of the term "Spasmodic School" which Aytoun invented. Smith was, from all accounts, one of the most genial, kindly, and sociable of men, with admirable common-sense, and with none of the vanity and readiness to take offence, which too often tend to make the way of young poets rougher than they might be.

The reaction from the feeling that produced the excessive excitement about "The Life Drama" is hardly justified. Smith is more neglected than he should be. Even his prose is not spoken of, or referred to, according to its real claims, for its combined force and felicity—its charm of suggestive dreamy music, and the honeyed thought with which it is sometimes touched. His is a reputation that has suffered through being exaggerated at the start: but there is much in his later efforts both in prose and verse, that has the stamp of the Master, and should not be allowed to pass into oblivion because he was the victim of excessive praise and notoriety at the outset of his career.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

A LIFE DRAMA.

1852.

ALEXANDER SMITH.

I.—LOVE.

(FROM SCENE II.)

[Lady opens the book, a slip of paper falls out ; she reads.]

THE fierce exulting worlds, the motes in rays,
The churlish thistles, scented briers,
The wind-swept blue-bells on the sunny braes,
Down to the central fires,

Exist alike in Love. Love is a sea,
Filling all the abysses dim
Of lornest space, in whose deeps regally
Suns and their bright broods swim.

This mighty sea of Love, with wondrous tides,
Is sternly just to sun and grain ;
'Tis laving at this moment Saturn's sides,—
'Tis in my blood and brain.

All things have something more than barren use ;
There is a scent upon the brier,
A tremulous splendour in the autumn dew,
Cold morns are fringed with fire ;

The clodded earth goes up in sweet-breath'd flowers ;
In music dies poor human speech,
And into beauty blow those hearts of ours,
When Love is born in each.

Life is transfigured in the soft and tender
Light of Love, as a volume dun
Of rolling smoke becomes a wreathèd splendour
In the declining sun.

Driven from cities by his restless moods,
In incense-glooms and secret nooks,
A miser o'er his gold—the lover broods
O'er vague words, earnest looks.

Oft is he startled on the sweetest lip;
Across his midnight sea of mind
A Thought comes streaming, like a blazing ship
Upon a mighty wind.

A Terror and a Glory! Shocked with light,
His boundless being glares aghast;
Then slowly settles down the wonted night,
All desolate and vast.

Daisies are white upon the churchyard sod,
Sweet tears, the clouds lean down and give.
This world is very lovely. O my God,
I thank Thee that I live!

Ringed with his flaming guards of many kinds,
The proud Sun stoops his golden head,
Grey Eve sobs crazed with grief; to her the winds
Shriek out, "The Day is dead."

I gave this beggar Day no alms, this Night
Has seen nor work accomplished, planned,
Yet this poor Day shall soon in memory's light
A summer rainbow stand!

There is no evil in this present strife ;
From th' shivering Seal's low moans,
Up through the shining tiers and ranks of life,
To stars upon their thrones,

The seeming ills are Loves in dim disguise ;
Dark moral knots, that pose the seer,
If *we* are lovers, in our wider eyes
Shall hang, like dew-drops, clear.

Ye are my menials, ye thick-crowding years !
Ha ! yet with a triumphant shout
My spirit shall take captive all the spheres,
And ring their riches out.

God ! what a glorious future gleams on me ;
With nobler senses, nobler peers,
I'll wing me through Creation like a bee,
And taste the gleaming spheres !

While some are trembling o'er the poison-cup,
While some grow lean with care, some weep,
In this luxurious faith I'll wrap me up,
As in a robe, and sleep.

II.—WHERE THE WEST HAS SUNSET-
BLOOMED.

(FROM SCENE IV.)

WHERE the west has sunset-bloomed,
Where a hero's heart is tombed,
Where a thunder-cloud has gloomed,
Scen, becomes a part of me.
Flowers and rills live sunnily
In gardens of my memory.
Through its walks and leafy lanes,
Float fair shapes 'mong sunlight rains ;
Blood is running in their veins.

One a queenly maiden fair,
Sweepeth past me with an air,
Kings might kneel beneath her stare.

Round her heart a rosebud free,
Reeled I, like a drunken bee ;
Alas ! it would not ope to me.

One comes shining like a saint,
But her face I cannot paint,
For mine eyes and blood grow faint.

Eyes are dimmed as by a tear,
Sounds are ringing in mine ear,
I feel only, she is here,

That she laugheth where she stands,
That she mocketh with her hands ;
I am bound in tighter bands.

Laid 'mong faintest blooms is one,
Singing in the setting sun,
And her song is never done.

She was born 'mong water-mills ;
She grew up 'mong flowers and rills,
In the hearts of distant hills.

There, into her being stole
Nature, and embued the whole,
And illumed her face and soul.

She grew fairer than her peers ;
Still her gentle forehead wears
Holy lights of infant years.

Her blue eyes, so mild and meek,
She uplifteth, when I speak,
Lo! the blushes mount her cheek.

Weary I of pride and jest,
In this rich heart I would rest,
Purple and love-lined nest.

III.—THE CALLOW YOUNG.

(FROM SCENE VI.)

'THE callow young were huddling in the nests,
The marigold was burning in the marsh,
Like a thing dipt in sunset, when He came.

My blood went up to meet Him on my face,
Glad as a child that hears its father's step,
And runs to meet him at the open porch.

I gave Him all my being, like a flower
That flings its perfume on a vagrant breeze ;
A breeze that wanders on and heeds it not.

His scorn is lying on my heart like snow,
My eyes are weary, and I fain would sleep ;
The quietest sleep is underneath the ground.

Are ye around me, friends ? I cannot see,
I cannot hear the voices that I love,
I lift my hands to you from out the night !

Methought I felt a tear upon my cheek ;
Weep not, my mother ! It is time to rest,
And I am very weary ; so, good night !'

IV.—“SUMMER HATH MURMURED WITH HER
LEAFY LIPS.”(FROM SCENE XI.—*Night.*)WALTER, *standing alone in his garden.*

WALTER.

SUMMER hath murmured with her leafy lips
Around my home, and I have heard her not ;
I've missed the process of three several years,
From shaking wind-flowers to the tarnished gold
That rustles sere on Autumn's aged boughs.
I went three years ago, and now return,
As stag sore-hunted a long summer day
Creeps in the eve to its deep forest-home. [*A pause.*
This is my home again ! Once more I hail
The dear old gables and the creaking vanes.
It stands all flecked with shadows in the moon,
Patient, and white, and woeful. 'Tis so still,
It seems to brood upon its youthful years,
When children sported on its ringing floors,
And music trembled through its happy rooms.
'Twas here I spent my youth, as far removed
From the great heavings, hopes, and fears of man,
As unknown isle asleep in unknown seas.
Gone my pure heart, and with it happy days ;
No manna falls around me from on high,
Barely from off the desert of my life
I gather patience and severe content.
God is a worker. He has thickly strewn
Infinity with grandeur. God is Love ;
He yet will wipe away Creation's tears,
And all the worlds shall summer in His smile.
Why work I not ? The veriest mote that sports
Its one-day life within the sunny beam
Has its stern duties. Wherefore have I none ?
I will throw off this dead and useless past

As a strong runner, straining for his life,
Unclasps a mantle to the hungry winds.
A mighty purpose rises large and slow
From out the fluctuations of my soul,
As, ghost-like, from the dim and tumbling sea
Starts the completed moon. [*Another pause.*]

I have a heart to dare,
And spirit-thews to work my daring out ;
I'll cleave the world as a swimmer cleaves the sea,
Breaking the sleek green billows into froth,
With tilting full-blown chest, and scattering
With scornful breath the kissing, flattering foam,
That leaps and dallies with his dripping lip.
Thou'rt distant, now, O World ! I hear thee not ;
No pallid fringes of thy fires to-night
Droop round the large horizon. Yet, O World !
I have thee in my power, and as a man
By some mysterious influence can sway
Another's mind, making him laugh and weep,
Shudder or thrill, such power have I on thee.
Much have I suffered, both from thee and thine ;
Thou shalt not 'scape me, World ! I'll make thee weep ;
I'll make my lone thought cross thee like a spirit
And blanch thy braggart cheeks, lift up thy hair,
And make thy great knees tremble ; I will send
Across thy soul dark herds of demon dreams,
And make thee toss and moan in troubled sleep ;
And, waking, I will fill thy forlorn heart
With pure and happy thoughts, as summer woods
Are full of singing-birds. I come from far,
I'll rest myself, O World ! awhile on thee,
And half in earnest, half in jest, I'll cut
My name upon thee, pass the arch of Death,
Then on a stair of stars go up to God,

CITY POEMS.

1857.

ALEXANDER SMITH.

I.—BARBARA.

(FROM "HORTON.")

ON the Sabbath-day,
Through the churchyard old and grey,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves, I held my rustling
way ;
And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul
like balms,
'Mid the gorgeous storms of music—in the mellow
organ-calms,
'Mid the upward streaming prayers, and the rich
and solemn psalms,
I stood careless, Barbara !

My heart was elsewhere
While the organ shook the air,
And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the
people with a prayer ;
But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and
saint-like shine
Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes
on mine—
Gleamed and vanished in a moment—O that face
was surely thine,
Out of Heaven, Barbara !

O pallid, pallid face !
O earnest eyes of grace !
When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place ;

You came running forth to meet me with my love-
gift on your wrist :
The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost
in mist—
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,
That wild morning, Barbara !

I searched, in my despair,
Sunny noon and midnight air ;
I could not drive away the thought that you were
lingering there.
O many and many a winter night I sat when you
were gone
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire
alone—
Within the dripping churchyard, the rain plashing
on your stone,
You were sleeping, Barbara.

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link
I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by
yon brink ?
Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and
guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through
lattice-bars,
The silent midnight heaven moving o'er us with its
stars,
Till the day broke, Barbara ?

In the years I've changed ;
Wild and far my heart has ranged,

And many sins and errors now have been on me
 avenged ;
But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good
 I lacked :
I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love
 intact—
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless
 cataract.
Still I love you, Barbara !

O Love ! I am unblest ;
With many doubts oppress
I wander like a desert wind without a place of rest.
Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry
 shore,
The hunger of my soul were stilled ; for Death hath
 told you more
Than the melancholy world doth know,—things
 deeper than all lore,
You could teach me, Barbara ?

In vain, in vain, in vain !
You will never come again,
There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe
 of rain ;
The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are
 in the tree,
Round selfish shores for ever moans the hurt and
 wounded sea :
There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death
 and thee,—
Barbara !

II.—GLASGOW.

SING, Poet, 'tis a merry world ;
That cottage smoke is rolled and curled
In sport, that every moss
Is happy, every inch of soil ;—
Before *me* runs a road of toil
With my grave cut across.
Sing, trailing showers and breezy downs—
I know the tragic hearts of towns.
City ! I am true son of thine ;
Ne'er dwelt I where great mornings shine
Around the bleating pens ;
Ne'er by the rivulets I strayed,
And ne'er upon my childhood weighed
The silence of the glens.
Instead of shores where ocean beats,
I hear the ebb and flow of streets.
Black Labour draws his weary waves,
Into their secret-moaning caves ;
But with the morning light,
The sea again will overflow
With a long weary sound of woe,
Again to faint in night.
Wave am I in that sea of woes,
Which, night and morning, ebbs and flows.
I dwelt within a gloomy court,
Wherein did never sunbeam sport ;
Yet there my heart was stirr'd—
My very blood did dance and thrill,
When on my narrow window-sill,
Spring lighted like a bird.
Poor flowers—I watched them pine for weeks,
With leaves as pale as human cheeks.

Afar, one summer, I was borne ;
Through golden vapours of the morn,
 I heard the hills of sheep :
I trod with a wild ecstasy
The bright fringe of the living sea :
 And on a ruined keep
I sat, and watched an endless plain
Blacken beneath the gloom of rain.

O fair the lightly sprinkled waste,
O'er which a laughing shower has raced !
 O fair the April shoots !
O fair the woods on summer days,
While a blue hyacinthine haze
 Is dreaming round the roots !
In thee, O City ! I discern
Another beauty, sad and stern.

Draw thy fierce streams of blinding ore,
Smite on a thousand anvils, roar
 Down to the harbour-bars ;
Smoulder in smoky sunsets, flare
On rainy nights, with street and square
 Lie empty to the stars.
From terrace proud to alley base
I know thee as my mother's face.

When sunset bathes thee in his gold,
In wreathes of bronze thy sides are rolled,
 Thy smoke is dusky fire ;
And, from the glory round thee poured,
A sunbeam like an angel's sword
 Shivers upon a spire.
Thus have I watched thee, Terror ! Dream !
While the blue Night crept up the stream.

The wild Train plunges in the hills,
He shrieks across the midnight rills ;
Streams through the shifting glare,
The roar and flap of foundry fires,
That shake with light the sleeping shires ;
And on the moorlands bare,
He sees afar a crown of light
Hang o'er thee in the hollow night.

At midnight, when thy suburbs lie
As silent as a noonday sky,
When larks with heat are mute,
I love to linger on thy bridge,
All lonely as a mountain ridge,
Disturbed but by my foot ;
While the black lazy stream beneath,
Steals from its far-off wilds of heath.

And through thy heart, as through a dream,
Flows on that black disdainful stream ;
All scornfully it flows,
Between the huddled gloom of masts,
Silent as pines unvexed by blasts—
'Tween lamps in streaming rows.
O wondrous sight ! O stream of dread !
O long dark river of the dead !

Afar, the banner of the year
Unfurls : but dimly prisoned here,
'Tis only when I greet
A dropt rose lying in my way,
A butterfly that flutters gay
Athwart the noisy street,
I know the happy Summer smiles
Around thy suburbs, miles on miles.

'Twere neither pæan now, nor dirge,
The flash and thunder of the surge
 On flat sands wide and bare ;
No haunting joy or anguish dwells
In the green light of sunny dells,
 Or in the starry air.
Alike to me the desert flower,
The rainbow laughing o'er the shower.

While o'er thy walls the darkness sails,
I lean against the churchyard rails ;
 Up in the midnight towers
The belfried spire, the street is dead,
I hear in silence over head
 The clang of iron hours :
It moves me not—I know her tomb
Is yonder in the shapeless gloom.

All raptures of this mortal breath,
Solemnities of life and death,
 Dwell in thy noise alone :
Of me thou hast become a part—
Some kindred with my human heart
 Lives in thy streets of stone ;
For we have been familiar more
Than galley-slave and weary oar.

The beech is dipped in wine ; the shower
Is burnished ; on the swinging flower
 The latest bee doth sit.
The low sun stares through dust of gold,
And o'er the darkening heath and wold
 The large ghost-moth doth flit.
In every orchard Autumn stands,
With apples in his golden hands.

But all these sights and sounds are strange ;
Then wherefore from thee should I range ?

Thou hast my kith and kin :
My childhood, youth, and manhood brave ;
Thou hast that unforgotten grave

Within thy central din.
A sacredness of love and death
Dwells in thy noise and smoky breath.

III.—THE CHANGE.

“ O H ! never, never can I call
Another morning to my day,
And now through shade to shade I fall
From afternoon to evening grey.”
In bitterness these words I said,
And lo ! when I expected least,—
For day was gone,—a moonrise spread
Its emerald radiance up the east.

By passion's gaudy candle-lights,
I sat and watched the world's brave play ;
Blown out,—how poor the trains and sights
Looked in the cruel light of day !
I cursed Man for his spaniel heart,
His bounded brain, his lust of pelf—
Alas ! each crime of field and mart
Lived in a dark disease of self.

I saw the smiles and mean salaams
Of slavish hearts ; I heard the cry
Of maddened people's throwing palms
Before each checred and timbreled lie.

I loathed the brazen front and brag
Of bloated time ; in self-defence
Withdrew I to my lonely crag,
And fortress of indifference.

But Nature is revenged on those
Who turn from her to lonely days :
Contentment, like the speedwell, blows
Along the common-beaten ways.
The dead and thick green-mantled moats
That gird my house resembled me,
Or some long-weeded hull that rots
Upon a glazing tropic sea.

And madness ever round us lies,
The final bourne and end of thought ;
And Pleasure shuts her glorious eyes
At one cold glance and melts to nought ;
And Nature cannot hear us moan ;
She smiles in sunshine, raves in rain—
The music breathed by Love alone
Can ease the world's immortal pain,

The sun for ever hastes sublime,
Waved onward by Orion's lance ;
Obedient to the spherul chime,
Across the world the seasons dance ;
The flaming elements ne'er bewail
Their iron bounds, their less or more ;
The sea can drown a thousand sail,
Yet rounds the pebbles on the shore.

I looked with pride on what I'd done,
I counted merits o'er anew,
In presence of the burning sun,
Which drinks me like a drop of dew.

A lofty scorn I dared to shed
On human passions, hopes, and jars,
I—standing on the countless dead,
And pitied by the countless stars.

But mine is now a humbled heart,
My lonely pride is weak as tears ;
No more I seek to stand apart,
A mocker of the rolling years.
Imprisoned in this wintry clime,
I've found enough, O Lord of breath,
Enough to plume the feet of time,
Enough to hide the eyes of death.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

ALEXANDER SMITH.

I.—TO —.

THE broken moon lay in the autumn sky,
And I lay at thy feet ;
You bent above me ; in the silence I
Could hear my wild heart beat.

I spoke ; my soul was full of trembling fears
At what my words would bring :
You raised your face, your eyes were full of tears,
As the sweet eyes of Spring.

You kissed me then, I worshipped at thy feet
Upon the shadowy sod,
Oh, fool, I loved thee ! loved thee, lovely cheat !
Better than Fame or God.

My soul leaped up beneath thy timid kiss ;
What then to me were groans,
Or pain, or death ? Earth was a round of bliss,
I seemed to walk on thrones.

And you were with me 'mong the rushing wheels
'Mid Trade's tumultuous jars ;
And where to awe-struck wilds the Night reveals
Her hollow gulf of stars.

Before your window, as before a shrine,
I've knelt 'mong dew-soaked flowers,
While distant music-bells, with voices fine,
Measured the midnight hours.

There came a fearful moment : I was pale,
You wept, and never spoke,
But clung around me as the woodbine frail
Clings, pleading, round an oak.

Upon my wrong I steadied up my soul,
And flung thee from myself ;
I spurned thy love as 'twere a rich man's dole,—
It was my only wealth.

I spurned thee ! I, who loved thee, could have died,
That hoped to call thee " wife,"
And bear thee, gently—smiling at my side,
Through all the shocks of life !

Too late, thy fatal beauty and thy tears,
Thy vows, thy passionate breath ;
I'll meet thee not in Life, nor in the spheres
Made visible by Death.

EDINBURGH.

A FRAGMENT.

(FROM "LAST LEAVES.")

AH me, the years they come and go !
Twelve times the snowdrop o'er the snow
Hath shiver'd ; June hath sway'd
Rich rose-branch, full-blown rose and bud ;
Broad sun-flower from its disc of blood
A sun-like glory ray'd—
Since, urged by passionate unrest,
I sang the City of the West.

Grown staid, somewhat now I scorn
The mavis of my early morn,
 Clear-singing 'gainst the sheen ;
Care, that sleeps late, and early stirs,
Like daily feet of villagers
 Across the village green,
Hath worn its track—and youth's delight
An Autumn swallow, taken flight.

Another and a nobler Me
Dwells in regretful memory,
 Bright-eyed, and golden-hair'd ;
No more I breathe melodious song ;
Yet to these later years belong
 Moods, passions, unimpair'd :
Still lives the rapture of the eye,
Dim city, hanging in the sky !

The dazzling cataract, strong and loud ;
The reddening of the morning cloud ;
 Ben-Blaaven's craggy spears,
And ridge, half lost in misty steam ;
Brown tangle-beds, that heave and gleam
 Idly round stony piers ;
Rude turf hut, girl in scarlet cloak
Set in an azure film of smoke—

I love, as I did long ago ;—
Yea, better ; for I've come to know
 The loveliest space of sky
Is that which silently o'erbends
Old apple-blossom'd gable-ends,
 Wherein men live and die.
The world is lovely ; but the sight
Of man adds pathos to delight.

Girt with thy cloudy equipage,
Swart city, thou wert once the cage
 In which I sang—Afar
I cannot hear thy solemn roar
Ascending, when day's toil is o'er,
 To meet the evening star.
My later home is still and fair
With mournfulness of sunset air.

Edina, high in heaven wan,
Towered, templed, Metropolitan,
 Waited upon by hills,
River, and wide-spread ocean-tinged
By April light, or draped and fringed
 As April vapour wills.
Thou hangest, like a Cyclops' dream,
High in the shifting weather-gleam.

Fair art thou when above thy head
The mistless firmament is spread ;
 But when the twilight's screen
Draws glimmering round thy towers and spires,
And thy lone bridge, uncrown'd by fires,
 Hangs in the dim ravine,
Thou art a very Persian tale—
Oh, Mirza's vision, Bagdad's vale !

The spring time stains with emerald
Thy Castle's precipices bald ;
 Within thy streets and squares
The sudden summer camps, and blows
The plenteous chariot-shaken rose ;
 Or, lifting unawares
My eyes from out thy central strife,
Lo, far off, harvest-brazen Fife !

When rain-drops gemming tree and plant,
The rainbow is thy visitant,
 Lovely as on the moors ;
When sunset flecks with loving ray
Thy wilderness of gables grey,
 And hoary embrasures ;
When great Sir Walter's moon-blanch'd shrine,
Rich carved, as Melrose, gleams divine,
I know thee ; and I know thee, too
On winter nights, when 'gainst the blue
 Thy high, gloom-wilder'd ridge
Breaks in a thousand splendours ; lamps
Gleam broadly in the valley damps ;
 Thy air-suspended bridge
Shines stedfast ; and the modern street
Looks on, star-fretted, loud with feet.

* * * * *

Once, on a Royal Nuptial Eve,
I saw thy bulk of Castle heave,
 In fire and vapour roll'd ;
St. Giles wore strange and gem-like light ;
St. George's dome, aloft in night,
 Hung like a fleece of gold ;
Sir Walter's shrine, 'mid rubies, beryls,
Glow'd with the chasten'd glow of pearls :
March wind in fitful gusts that came,
Made stream the wild padella flame ;
 Dull came the cannons boom :
Past all thy fronts of blazing pride,
Through streets that shone, a jubilant tide
 Rolled, hued with sudden bloom,
As rainbow-like, through festal air,
Passed emerald gleam and crimson glare.

* * * * *

Fair art thou, City, to the eye,
 But fairer to the memory :
 There is no place that breeds—
 Not Venice 'neath her mellow moons,
 When the sea-pulse of full lagoons
 Waves all her palace weeds—
 Such wistful thoughts of far away,
 Of the eternal yesterday.

Within thy high-piled Canongate
 The air is of another date ;
 All speaks of ancient time :
 Traces of gardens, dials, wells,
 Thy dizzy gables, oyster-shells
 Imbedded in the lime—
 Thy shields above the doors of peers
 Are old as Mary Stuart's tears.

Street haunted by the step of Knox ;
 Darnley's long, heavy-scented locks ;
 Ruthven's blood-freezing stare ;
 Dark Murray, dreaming of the crown—
 His ride through fair Linlithgow town,
 And the man waiting there
 With loaded fuse, undreamed of—wiles
 Of Mary, and her mermaid smiles !

Thou saw'st Montrose's passing face
 Shame-strike the gloating silk and lace,
 And jeering plumes that filled
 The balcony o'erhead ; with pride
 Thou saw'st Prince Charles bare-headed ride,
 While bagpipes round him shrilled,
 And far Culloden's smoky racks
 Hid scaffold craped, and bloody axe.

What wine hast thou known brawl be-spilt !

What daggers ruddy to the hilt !

What stately minuets

Walked slowly o'er thy oaken floors !

What hasty kisses at thy doors !

What banquetings and bets !

What talk, o'er man that lives and errs,

Of double-chinned philosophers !

Great City, every morning I

See thy wild fringes in the sky,

Soft-blurr'd with smoky grace :

Each evening note the blazing sun

Flush luridly thy vapours dun—

A spire athwart his face :

Each night I watch thy wondrous feast,

Like some far city of the East.

But most I love thee faint and fair,

Dim-pencill'd in the April air,

When in the dewy bush

I hear from budded thick remote

The rapture of the blackbird's throat,

The sweet note of the thrush ;

And all is shadowless and clear

In the uncoloured atmosphere.

* * * * *

Sebastian Evans.

1830.

SEBASTIAN EVANS, a distinguished member of a family eminent in literature, science, and art, was born at Market Bosworth, Leicestershire, 2nd March, 1830, and was educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. 1853, M.A. 1857, and LL.D. in 1868. From his grandfather, the Rev. Lewis Evans, a well-known astronomer, Professor of Mathematics at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, and from his father, the Rev. Arthur Benoni Evans, a linguist, a professor, a schoolmaster, and a somewhat voluminous author, whose youngest son he is, he derived a literary and an artistic strain, which he shared with his sister Anne, poetess and musician, and a portion of the scientific and antiquarian knowledge which culminated in his brother, John Evans, F.R.S., the President of the Society of Antiquaries.

Upon quitting the University in 1857 he became manager of the artistic department of the glass works of Messrs. Chance Brothers & Co., and while there designed the Robin Hood window exhibited in the International Exhibition of 1862, and lithographed in Waring's "Masterpieces of Industrial Art." At this time also he wrote the first of the two volumes of poetry which, with the addition of a few uncollected poems to be found in

magazines, entitle him to rank with Rossetti, Morris, and other contemporaries as a painter-poet.

Without taking the town by storm, "Brother Fabian's Manuscript, and other Poems" (Macmillan, 1865), won the author the warm recognition of many workers in literature and art, and established his position in the literary world. Whatever might be the merits or defects of these compositions they showed few traces of imitation of previous or contemporary models, and had little in common with the blossoms of verse which are a familiar product of minds whose harvest is to be prose. A quaint mediævalism was in sympathy with the early poems of William Morris. The studies of the two men had however lain in different directions, and the vivifying power in Evans was that of humour, to which Morris makes no pretence. A wonderfully accurate knowledge of mediæval history is, in "Brother Fabian's Manuscript," accompanied by a mystical and out-of-the-way erudition which no other poet seems to claim, and which includes much Eastern lore. Reading again these poems one feels that if any were to attempt to supplant the vainly re-called poet,—

"Who left untold
The story of Cambuscan bold";

it would be the author of "Brother Fabian's Manuscript." Underlying, moreover, the quasi-satirical framework of the whole is traceable a desire to suggest a noble, and, in some respects, a heroical moral. This finds perhaps its full utterance in the second volume, where it is summed in the line humorously written, but sincerely meant,—

"'Tis greater to be than to do."

The theory, meanwhile, on which the superstructure rests is told in a verse of "A Christmas Dream," included among the miscellaneous poems of the first volume,—

"Come, for the Old still breathes in the New,
Come, for the False is lost in the True,
And the Creed may die, but the Christ lives through."

Quaint, meanwhile, as the designs on early ecclesiastical ornament are the figures Dr. Evans introduces. Into the most solemn subjects the mocking spirit enters, as when the account is given of "The Three Kings of Cologne,"

"Caspar Melchior Balthazàr,"

who followed the star that led them to Bethlehem. "Robin Hood's Death and Burial" is a genuine old ballad, "Judas Iscariot's Paradise," is a curious old-fashioned saintly legend, and "Charlemagne's Daughter," a love story that might have been told by Bandello. One more of these curious legendary tales is that of "Nickar the Soulless," which, not less by its fluent and effective rhythm than by its story of *diablerie*, haunts the memory. In the miscellaneous poems are an impassioned address to Garibaldi, and a lament over the author's friend William Makepeace Thackeray, which rises to the memory even when charged with Lycidas, Thyrsis, and In Memoriam.

In 1867 Dr. Evans became editor of the *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, which, after vainly contesting Birmingham in the Conservative interest, he quitted in 1870. In 1873 he was called to the Bar, and joined the Oxford Circuit. Subsequently he edited, for a year or two, the *People*, a London Conservative weekly journal. While practising at the bar he

published his second volume, "In the Studio: a Decade of Poems" (London, Macmillan).

The qualities that distinguished the early volume are once more noticeable. Especially humorous is "Jones and Calypso," which, however, is modern in subject. "Dudman in Paradise," meanwhile, might have been included in "Brother Fabian's Manuscript." Its irreverence, for Dudman the hero indulges in much satire to the faces of St. Peter, St. Thomas, and St. Paul is only superficial, and its lesson is pious enough for Milton. Among the contents, two, "Arthur's Knighting" and the "Eve of Morte Arthur," deal, of course, with subjects from the Arthurian cycle. These are among the most serious, and also the most successful, efforts of Dr. Evans. They are written throughout in *Terza Rima*, which the author manages with exemplary success; they treat the subject from the point of view of Fate, conspicuously absent from the poems on the same theme of the Laureate, and are very noble and pathetic work. Dr. Evans lacks neither imagination nor fancy, nor any poetical gift. A tendency to over elaboration mars occasionally the effect of the longer poems, and the rhymes are occasionally bold enough and free enough for Browning. The whole is, however, work of a high class. Some of Dr. Evans' translations are singularly happy. Twenty-five copies were privately printed in 1884, of "John Baptist Spagnoli, of Mantua, Carmelite, to John Crestoni, of Piacenza Carmelite, then going away for a time to Monte Calestano Englished, with an introduction by Sebastian Evans."

JOSEPH KNIGHT.

SONGS AND BALLADS.

SEBASTIAN EVANS.

I.—CROCUS GATHERING.

COME, gather the crocus-cups with me,
And dream of the summer coming ;
Saffron and purple and snowy white,
All awake to the first bees' humming.

The white is there for the maiden-heart,
And the purple is there for sorrow :
The saffron is there for the true true love,
And they'll all be dead to-morrow.

II.—A ROUNDELAY.

COME, sit beneath the hawthorn tree,
And press thy lips to mine :
I have a merry song for thee,
Will cheer thy heart like wine.

O well the bonny heath may smile,
The lark sing clear above :
For we will love a little while,
Though all in vain we love.

And green the leaves should be o'erhead,
The bracken brown beneath :
For O, that thou and I lay dead
Upon the bonny heath !

III.—SHADOWS.

L ONELY o'er the dying ember
I the past recall,
And remember in December
April buds and August skies,
As the shadows fall and rise,
As the shadows rise and fall.

Quicker now they lift and flicker
On the dreary wall ;
Aye, and quicker still and thicker
Throng the fitful fantasies,
As the shadows fall and rise,
As the shadows rise and fall.

Dimmer now they shoot and shimmer
On the dreary wall,
Dimmer, dimmer, still they glimmer
Till the light in darkness dies,
And the other shadows rise,
And the other shadows fall.

IV.—THE BANNERS.

L ORDLY banners, waving to the stars,
Flap upon the night-wind, heavy with the dew,
Trustful youth is wending to the wars,
Strong in ancient faith to battle with the new.

Lordly banners, trodden in the clay,
Lie upon the mountain dank with other dew ;
Hapless Youth hath lost the bloody day,
Ancient faith is feeble, stronger is the new.

Lordly banners, other than of yore,
Flap upon the night-wind, heavy with the dew :
Youth to battle girdeth him once more,
New and Old are feeble,—mighty is the True !

V.—THE SEVEN FIDDLERS.

A BLUE robe on their shoulder,
And an ivory bow in hand,
Seven fiddlers came with their fiddles
A-fiddling through the land,
And they fiddled a tune on their fiddles
That none could understand.

For none who heard their fiddling
Might keep his ten toes still,
E'en the cripple threw down his crutches,
And danced against his will ;
Young and old they all fell a-dancing,
While the fiddlers fiddled their fill.

They fiddled down to the ferry—
The ferry by Severn-side,
And they stept aboard the ferry,
None else to row or guide,
And deftly steered the pilot,
And stoutly the oars they plied.

Then suddenly in mid channel
These fiddlers ceased to row,
And the pilot spake to his fellows
In a tongue that none may know :
“ Let us home to our fathers and brothers,
And the maidens we love below.”

Then the fiddlers seized their fiddles,
And sang to their fiddles a song :
“ We are coming, coming, O brothers,
To the home we have left so long,
For the world still loves the fiddler,
And the fiddler’s tune is strong.”

Then they stept from out the ferry
Into the Severn sea,
Down into the depths of the waters
Where the homes of the fiddlers be,
And the ferry-boat drifted slowly
Forth to the ocean free.

But where those jolly fiddlers
Walked down into the deep,
The ripples are never quiet,
But for ever dance and leap,
Though the Severn sea be silent,
And the winds be all asleep.

VI.—BALLAD.

(FROM “JUDAS ISCARIOT’S PARADISE.”)

Incipit de Juda Iscariote.

MIGHTILY ever the South wind blew,
And North, ever North, the good ship drew
With the holy Brandon, and Brandon’s crew.

North, ever North, till a glimmering dun
That lighted the icebergs, one by one,
Was all they knew of the noon-day sun.

On, through the darkness, and mist and snow,
Or a grisly moonlight, that served to show
How the sea snakes writhed in the deep below.

They heard, in the night, the icebergs crash
With a thundering shock, and grind, and gnash,
And the waves hiss back with a seething splash.
Nor anchor was cast, nor sail was furled,
Till they neared and saw where the fringe of the
world
Its arrows of flame through the welkin hurled.
And at Christmas, so near as they could count,
They came to an isle where a mighty mount
Spouted fire and smoke in a blazing fount.
Full many a mile there was smoke on the sea,
And the blaze ever leapt to the cloudracks free,
Rumbling and bellowing hideously.
And one cried, "Satanas calls—farewell!
For yonder mount is the mouth of Hell!"
And they saw him no more, but heard fiends yell.
And northward still, on that Christmas Day
They fared, till they saw where an iceberg lay
On the left, and the Saint bade steer that way.
And they saw One, naked, sit on a stone,
Worn by the waves to sinew and bone,
Wringing his hands with a dolorous moan.
A long loose cloth was thonged by his chin,
That flapped in the wind on his wet bare skin,
And ox tongues two were tied to his shin.
And now in the wave, and now in the wind,
Drenched, and pinched, and beaten, and blind,
The wretch ever sat on his stone and pined.
And the Saint said, "Speak, be thou man or ghost,
And tell what thou art, for a thing so lost
Never greeted I yet by wave or coast!"

And he answered :—" I, ere I went to pain,
Was the Lord's Iscariot chamberlain,
Judas, who sold the Christ for gain ! "

Then the shipmates all were aghast for fear,
But the good Saint bade cast anchor near,
And asked of the ghost : " What dost thou here ? "

And Judas answered : " By Christ's dear grace
This day am I loosed from mine own due place
With Herod and Pilate and Caiaphas ;

" For He whom the Gates of the Hells obey
Each winter hath granted me here to stay
From Christmas Eve for a night and a day.

" And this is my Paradise, here alone
To sit with my cloth and tongues and stone,
The sole three things in the world mine own.

" This cloth I bought from the Lord's privy purse,
But gave to a leper.—It hath this curse,
That it beats on my skin, but it saves from worse.

" These tongues I gave to the poor for meat
In the name of Christ,—and the fish that eat
Thereon as they list, forbear my feet.

" This stone I found by a road where it lay
And set for a step in a miry way,
Therefore sit I on stone, not ice, this day ! "

Then a rout of Fiends came flying amain
With a roar and a rush like a hurricane
To bear the Iscariot back to pain.

But their might was nought, for the Saint was nigh,
And round and round with a ghastly cry
And clapping of wings they flew harmless by.

"Flee hence, flee hence!" they howled and hissed:
"Already in Hell is its darling missed!
Wilt thou save the traitor who sold the Christ?"

And the Saint said, "Nay, my might is none,
But if Jesus' will that ye leave him alone
For another night, God's will be done!"

And they screamed and fled to their Hell once more.
And Judas thanked Brandon o'er and o'er
So piteously that all wept sore.

And they bided there through the dreary night,
And they knew 'twas morn by a fiendish flight
And the shriek as they fled of a tortured sprite.

And mightily, lo, the North Wind blew,
And South, ever South, the good ship drew
With the holy Brandon and Brandon's crew.

VII.—DUDMAN IN PARADISE.

1875.

STRANGE stories bin there in mine Author's book;
And much I marvel whether all be sooth:
For hugely he that made this tale mistook,
Or I, who weave it in my rimes uncouth
Do touching heavenly things false doctrine hold.
Yet speaketh he as one that speaketh truth;
And, as a garment, that the Heavens wax old
And change, as saith the Psalmist, I believe—
Believe who list the tale mine Author told.

When Fulke Fitzurse deceased one Christmas Eve
His neediest villein, Dudman, also died.

Most meritoriously the Earl took leave
Of this vain world with all its pomps and pride :

Clean shrift he made, and many a holy vow,
As Christian Earl became at Christmas-tide.

His soul he willed to Heaven : the out-lying plough
Of arable to Saint Werewulf's, with release

From fine or claim : Saint Werewulf holds it now.
Moreover, in expectance of decease

He made great oath that if God took him hence
He would with Ralph Grentmeynell die in peace,

And bear no further malice. Penitence
So full, said Bishop Wulstan, ne'er before
Gladdened the heart of angels. Forty pence
Bequeathed he also to relieve a score

Of crippled bedesmen at the Maunday dole,
Beside his gifts to Wulstan and the four

Who aye sing mass in chantry for his soul.
In brief, no temporal Earl e'er slipped his clay
With fairer claim to saintly gloriolc.

Poor Dudman went less orthodox a way,

The churchmen all being busy with the Earl.
He prayed, indeed, such prayer as villeins pray,

And mused if Lazarus, too, were less than Churl :
And Cis, the goodwife, bade him be of cheer,

Because our Lady was no foolish girl,
And knowing, certes, that the pious Peer

Needed good Father Roch to help him die,
Would make allowance, holding Dudman clear.

So died both Earl and Hind. With vigilant eye
What time Fitzurse's spirit should leave his lips,

His Angel and his Fiend watched hovering nigh,

And, as it shuddered forth like chick that chips
The encumbering egg-shell, each swooped down amain
And clutched the prize—Hell, Heaven at tugs and grips.

In truth the poor soul had been rent in twain,
And half flown up to Heaven, half down to Hell,

So fierce and yet so equal was the strain,
Had not Saint Michael—who had flown to tell

The Wardens of the Pit that certain ghosts
Might spend that Christmas-tide without their cell,

Just then, back-soaring from the dolorous coasts,
Espied the fray, and with celestial foot—

The foot that trampled on the Infernal hosts
In Heaven's first warfare, golden-sheathed, acute

With diamond toe-piece—spurned the yelping fiend
Prone through the void from the Archangelic boot

Six thousand leagues towards Limbo. "Had I weened,"
He said, "that one so piously renowned

As my lord Fulke Fitzurse had been convened
To join our Christmas revels, I had found

An escort worthier his so high decree,
That long ere now had scotched yon pestering hound!

As 'tis, no worse is lucky." Thus the three,
Slow-footing, started toward the Eternal Gate;

The Earl still somewhat stiff in hip and knee.

Dudman, the while, had died with none to wait

Either from Hell or Heaven to claim his sprite:
Poor souls like his being batched in six or eight

And given in charge, as 'twere a single wight,
To prentice-angels and to prentice-imps,

Who, like their wards, can scarce tell left from right,
Fiends, angels, souls scarce counted more than shrimps

Compared with those of nobles like Fitzurse.
So, when he died, the villein caught no glimpse

Of guide at all, for better or for worse ;
His ghostly warders, then five miles away,
Watching for ale-wife Sybil to disburse
Such soul as she possessed, not worth a fray—
And thus, lone-wandering, finding none to tell
Which road were best, he chose the upward way
For two good reasons : one, that paths to Hell
Lay always downward, so the Parson said ;
The other that the Earl, he knew full well,
Would never condescend, alive or dead,
To mingle with the rabble—argal, he,
Dudman, who spied his lordship just ahead,
Could scarce do less than follow. Of the three,
Moreover, those to left and right wore wings,
And one, at least, if mightier Earl could be,
Than Fulke himself, seemed mightier Earl—which things,
He argued, left no reasonable doubt
As to the road toward Heaven. The only stings
That pricked him were misgivings lest the rout
In front should enter Heaven and spar the door,
Leaving himself, poor Hind, unblessed without.

Thus on they footed some three miles or four,
And as they paced, a joyous dawn-like glow
In front waxed bright and brighter evermore.
No need to tell whence that sweet sheen should flow,
For even the villein felt that aught so fair
Only the Lord's own Paradise could show.
And now, the last ridge mounted, o'er the bare
And desolate waste of rocks and desert sand
They hailed the city of God with silent prayer.
Clear shone the inviolate walls on either hand
League after league, a girdle as of Morn :
Golden, their gold was of the Sinless Land,

Self-lustrous, roseate—not the dross forlorn
That only to the living seems divine,
But ore in Eden, not in Ophir born.
And o'er the bulwarks, builded as of wine
Smitten to stone, they saw tall citadels
Of crystal in interminable line
Cresting the scarp, and broad-winged sentinels
Trampling full-armed between in twos and threes
On pathways paven as with lips of shells;
And, crown of all celestial mysteries,
Spiring in sunbright splendour o'er the whole—
The temple-palace where God sits and sees
Flashed rainbow-wrought—the eternal capitol
That veils the ineffable shrine and throne above,
And fills the land with glory, as the soul
Within makes lovely the bright eyes we love.
That light the City's life-blood seemed to be,
And swift throughout with living pulse to move.

And now the four drew nigh. "Guests, one, two, three,"
Reckoned Saint Peter, with a triple blast
Upon his bugle: "One of them I see,
A stranger and a noble"—for the last,
Dudman, who slunk behind the Archangel's wing,
If seen, was not worth counting. Thus they passed
On to the drawbridge—Dudman, with a spring
Lurking so close behind the giant stride
Of Michael, hugest captain of the King,
That neither angel nor apostle spied.
Poor villein, how he trembled! He, unshriven,
Unblest, to thrust him that great lord beside,
A Saint, nay, Earl, with all his sins forgiven,
And these dread gentle folk with wings so white!
Still, men will make strange shifts to win to Heaven,

And Dudman was no craven, though the fright
Shook all his limbs like ague. So they came
Under the archway to the Gates of Light.

The Saint—who hath not heard Saint Peter's fame?
The Janitor of Heaven—by bugle-call
Of a soul's advent having made proclaim,
Shouldered his key and from the embattled wall
Descended to the portal. Straight, a clang
That shook like thunder, yet more musical
Than sweetest hymn Saint Cecily e'er sang
To intervals of organ psalmody—
A burst of trancing sound, through Eden rang,
As now revolving, Heaven's imperial key
Traversed the maze of amethystine wards
And rolling back the diamond bolts, set free
The aye-inviolable Gate that guards
The glories of the Paradise of God.
Then with a sweep like Doom's, which nought retards
Nought speeds, the eternal Door swung wide, and showed
Free access to the Lord's own Holy Land.
Yet not to enter that divine abode
Even Michael willed, before with outstretched hand
The Saint gave blessing, and then bade rehearse
The style of him for whom he did demand
Passport so priceless. "'Tis my Lord Fitzurse,
Quoth Michael: "never yet did Earl evince
Such pity as he, when he waxed worse
Ten days before he died." The Apostle-Prince
Smiled with benignest unction as he blessed
The lordly Pilgrim. "'Tis a se'nnight since
My lord," he said, "we heard of your bequest
To fair Saint Werewulf's house, and your good will
Toward even Sir Ralph so gracefully expressed—

'Tis to be hoped that your last codicil
May, 'spite all tyrannous mortmain-law, stand good:
Wulstan, I doubt not, will his trust fulfil
As one who knows what 'tis to wear a hood,
Enter, my Lord Fitzurse; within you'll find
Glad welcome to our Christmas Interlude."
Quoth Fulke with low obeisance, "'Tis most kind!
If e'er my aid may serve you, pray command!
To friend or foe Fitzurse ne'er came behind."
Then right and left, an angel hand-in-hand,
Into his birthright forward stepped the Earl,
In Heaven itself a freeman of the land.

Meanwhile, the villein, all his wits a-whirl,
Still crouching low behind the Archangel, crossed
Heaven's threshold that same moment. "Ho, Sir Churl!"
Thundered Saint Peter, as he spied the ghost
So deftly skulking in Saint Michael's wake;
"Who taught your Churlship manners?" All seemed lost!
Just as the dawn of heavenly bliss 'gan break
Upon his night of life, and every sense
Waxed keener, in perfection to partake
Of joy beyond all earthly joys intense:
Just as he first breathed air of Paradise
Fragrant with odorous balm and frankincense;
First heard the chant of angel symphonies,
First saw Heaven's inward splendour—thus to hear
That terrible voice chide in such awful wise:
"Out, out, vile serf! Dost dream that Heaven makes cheer
For hinds and villeins? Think you this the place
Where slaves like thee may sit with kings as peer?
Off, ere I ban thee, off!" With rueful face
The villein eyed the Saint from top to toe,
And seeing he bore no staff, took heart of grace:

“Sir Janitor,” quoth he, “three hours ago,
'Tis true, I was a villein, but the cock
Which called me forth to labour with his crow
Ne'er smote my conscience with so smart a shock
As that which crew when thou deniedst thy Lord !
And now why He, thy Master, called thee Rock,
Full well I see, for well thy words accord,
Thou stony-hearted ! Yet will I not stir !
Against my God ne'er spoke I treacherous word ;
And much I marvel why He should prefer
So false a follower thus to ward His door !”

- The Apostle quailed before the villager.
Athwart a thousand years arose once more
That eve of judgment in the High Priest's hall,
That third denial, those false oaths he swore,
The cock-crow shrilling forth his crime, the fall
Of the Divine eyes, pleading mournfully,
And the wild tears that answered that dread call !
Doubtful he stood, one hand upon his key,
The gate still open, fain to bid begone,
Yet shamed to silence by the villein's plea.

Just then, the Kingly Brethren of Cologne,
The Three Wise Men, who erst to Bethlehem bore
Rich offering from the East to Mary's Son,
Passed with Saint Thomas toward the temple-stair,
Rehearsing each his part, for in the Play
At Heaven's high Christmas-feast all actors were.
The Porter-Saint, who saw them pass that way,
Beckoned Saint Thomas : “ Bid this knave depart !
Unmannered clown, he heeds not aught I say !”

“ What ! ” quoth Saint Thomas, “ knows he what thou art
Yet dares defy thee ? Out, thou rascal, out !

And best were swiftest, ere thy bones shall smart ! ”
Dudman quaked inly, but his words were stout :

“ Rascal I may be, yet no Infidel !

Sir Saint, I have heard that one of old durst doubt

Whether our Lord Himself could rise from Hell :
Made hard his stubborn heart, nor would believe

Till He whom he mistrusted did compel.

I never doubted ! Ne’er did I receive

Gospel as fable ! Save it be God’s will
The faithful of the faithless must crave leave

To win to Heaven, I, Dudman, bide here still ! ”

The good Saint reddened. Tingling once again

Through to the heart and marrow shot the thrill
Of bitter-sweet remorse and joyous pain,

As when of old he touched the wounded side
And knew the living Christ was Christ the slain.

But to the sturdy clown he nought replied.

“ What can we do ? ” quoth Peter, sorely vexed,

“ The gate will stand agape all Christmastide
If thus he sticks so closely to his text.

Fie ! This gross ploughman-chattel of the farm
Plague us with stickling for his rights ? What next ? ”

“ Sir Saint,” quoth Dudman, “ thou wast scarce so warm
When thou didst net fish down in Galilee !

If ploughman sort with fisherman, what harm ? ”
Even as he spoke, like brass rang suddenly

A third shrill voice set all his hair astart ;

“ A villein, and not budge ? Draw forth the key,

Peter, and let the base-born cow-herd smart !

’Tis like thee, Peter, thus to have let him pass ;

With thee ’twas ever ‘ Simpleness is Art. ’ ”

“ Paul, brother,” quoth the first, for Paul it was,

“ Oust him thyself, for us he heedeth not ! ”

To which Saint Paul: "Ho, there, Sir Front-of-brass,
Sir Villein-in-gross, will truss thy prate and trot!
Out, ere I lay yon key athwart thy back,
And on thy clown's hide levy scot and lot!
Get forth I say! I am loath to touch thee! Pack!"

"Paul," quoth the villein, "for I know thy name,
Through all the twelve signs of the Zodiac
Have titles scarce so many as thou dost frame
Thus to miscall me, 'twere an easier thing

To clepe me Dudman. All unknown to fame,
'Tis true I am no godson of a king,

Nor child of a king's harlot. These my curls
Crisp not like his who weareth the Queen's ring.

I am no scion of the blood of Earls—
At least I trow not: none of all my kin

Within man's memory e'er took rank with churls,
Not even a saint among them. If 'tis sin

To be born villein, I confess the crime,
And to repent long since did I begin!

Yet, though I boast no pedigree sublime,
I ever loved God's nobles, and to hear

Of doughty deeds and champions of old time.
I know old tales of many a gallant peer

By beasts of men more bloody done to death
For that sweet Lord whose name they held so dear.

I know which Saint won Christ's first martyr-wreath,
When, as he told God's love, those murderous ones

Ran on him with stopped ears and gnashing teeth,
And all-to brake his holy head with stones:

Stephen, men called him. Him, too, well I know,
Who stood with dry white eyes and heard his groans—

Watched how the murderers smote him, blow on blow,
And held their garments—bade their hearts not faint

While limb could stir or drop of life-blood flow !
Saul was his name. Why tremblest thou, Sir Saint ?
Thy name is Paul, not Saul ! Art thou the same ?
If Saul be Paul, then why not Saint be Paint,
The fair outside that cloaks the inward shame ?
The white upon the tomb that hides within
Mere carrion filth and things without a name ?
Thou Saint of Paint ! Saul, Paul ! Is Sin the Pin
That pricks thy conscience ? Wilt thou drive me forth,
While heaven finds harbour for thine own foul sin ?
Dost still make havoc here as erst on earth ?
I tell thee, Saint, I stir not till worse crime
Be proven upon me than my villein's birth ! ”

The Saint was silenced. He recalled, what time
He journeyed to Damascus, that dread blaze,
The stroke, the terror, and the voice sublime.
Once more the eclipse of those three nights and days
That sealed his eyelids, mocked their blind distress
With the new keenness of that inward gaze.
Once more alone in Edom's wilderness,
In trance apocalyptic, o'er his brain
The hope divine flashed on his grief's excess.

The three mused mutely. And, behold, a train
With opal-shimmering wings, like rack that speeds
Athwart the belted moon, sailed nigh amain.
As when at eve a flight of plummy seeds
Skims o'er a pool, light-wafted on the sigh
Of dying June that faints among the reeds
And frets no ripple on the mirrored sky—
Each feathery pilgrim now flies on before,
Now lingers while his brethren pass him by,
One tiny diamond on the liquid floor

Greeting with starry kiss the poisoning toe
On which he hovers ere he fleet once more—
So did afar that angel-escort show,
Each floating first a moment, and each last,
Swift change, yet order in the sheeny row.
And in the midst, Himself a light that cast
A shadow even from angel-glorioles,
Yet sweet as darkness to hot eyes, there passed
The Holy Shepherd, only Lord of souls,
Whose love knows nought of earthly small nor great,
But all He made still succours and controls.

And now they halted nigh the Heavenly Gate,
And the three shamefast Saints bowed reverently
To Him they knew the umpire of debate.

Before his Lord the villein bowed the knee
And whispered, trembling, his unlessoned prayer :
“Mercy !” he prayed : “Afar, dear Lord, from Thee
These Saints of Thine would fain forbid me share

In this Thy kingdom—would have driven me hence
Into yon outer darkness and despair,

But I withstood them. If mine insolence
Merit reproof, do Thou, O Lord, reprove,
And in Thy mercy visit mine offence.

Full well I know that none may win above
Save Thou hast judged him in Thy righteousness ;
Search me and try my heart, Thou God of Love,
And deal just sentence, or to curse or bless !

Thou knowst I have lived in sorrow from my birth,
A villein, outcast, friendless, comfortless :
A hewer of wood and tiller of the earth

With which twice o’er I have been bought and sold,
And paid my new lord fine upon my hearth.

I have toiled in summer’s heat and winter’s cold,

Yet aye the grey wolf loped within my door ;
And bairns and wife spake things that make men old
Or ere their prime to hear. Thou knowst how sore
The lot Thou dealtest—toil that ne'er had end,
Hunger and sickness and those bonds I bore.
Yet with Thy dealings did I ne'er contend :
I wrought my work and blest Thee, for I knew
That what was good, Thou in good time wouldst send.
I ever to Thy Priests showed reverence due ;
And all they taught received for gospel pure :
Though much, not less impossible than true
Thou knowst was hard to accept with credence sure
For simple villein, whom to subtle creeds
No book-lore of the schools did e'er inure
'Tis true, I cannot boast of godly deeds
Like Fulke, my lord's—nor gold nor fee were mine ;
Yet have I many a time denied my needs
To serve one needier. Oft did I assign
My ingle-stool to grandam Petronill,
And pinched to let Wat charcoal-burner dine.
None did I ever wrong by word or will —
Thou knowst, O Lord, I lie not. If Thou wilt,
Bid Father Roch tell all I e'er did ill,
And, though he shrove me, count up all my guilt !
I ask no better ! I will ne'er misdoubt
That even for me Thy precious blood was spilt !
Still to Thy promise yield I faith devout,
Which saith that him who cometh unto Thee
Dear Jesus, Thou in no wise wilt cast out ! ”

He ceased and Heaven was mute. With wordless plea
Imploring answer, crept he suppliant-wise
Anigh the Lord of Lords and clasped His knees,
And gazed unfaltering into God's dread eyes.

Then spake the Holiest: "I have heard thy prayer
Long since, and willed thee to My Paradise,
Thou last of all My brethren! Equal heir
With saints and martyrs, nor of less esteem
Than they which erst did crown and sceptre bear:
Enter, thou faithful servant, nor misdeem
Whate'er thine eyes have seen, thine ears have heard!
In Heaven as earth, things are not as they seem!

Thus to the villein spake the Eternal Word,
And a new joy woke harmony supreme
Of angel-voices praising Christ the Lord!

Thomas Edward Brown.

1830.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN was born in 1830 at Douglas in the Isle of Man. After studying at King William's College in the Isle of Man, he went up to Christ Church, Oxford, where he took a double first in 1853. He was made a Fellow of Oriel, and was ordained in 1855. He was appointed Vice-Principal of King William's College in the Isle of Man in 1855, and became head master of the Crypt School, Gloucester, in 1861. He was made assistant-master of Clifton College in 1863, a post which he still holds. "Betsy Lee," the first of his tales in verse, appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1873, and secured its author recognition as a new force in literature. The poem was republished with three others under the title of "Fo'c'sle Yarns" in 1881, a second edition appearing in 1889. "The Doctor" was issued in 1887, and "The Manx Witch" in 1889.

This author's poems deal almost wholly with Manx scenes and characters, and are for the most part written in the Manx dialect. His work is deeply dyed in passion and romance, and informed with humour alternately genial and grim. He excels in narrative, in dialogue, and in description. He knows the world; he has a strong grasp of character, and he is especially familiar with the ways of sailors, and fishermen, and rustics. He presents

his rough fisher lads and his country lasses with perfect fidelity to fact, and yet without a single touch of coarseness. He neither works with the rose-colour of the sentimental idyllist, nor with the grime of the so-called "realist." He does not set down whatsoever he has seen and heard without regard to artistic seemliness and congruity. He selects the things which are beautiful, and memorable, and significant, from the things which are trivial and coarse, colourless and irrelevant. Such work is not only more impressive and more beguiling than the "realist's"; it gives a truer picture of life than can ever be obtained by an indiscriminate, photographic reproduction of details. In point of style the author of "*Fo'c'sle Yarns*" has achieved a crucial literary feat. His lines are in keeping with the character of the roughly-bred, ignorant man from whose lips they are assumed to fall, while they are nevertheless instinct with poetical beauty. To do this—to keep your fo'c'sle yarn-spinner true to nature, and yet to make him tell his tale in words which are never coarse nor vulgar, but which are on the contrary imbued with an unconventional charm,—to do this is assuredly to do a far harder thing than to weave silken phrases with the idyllist who glosses over the hard facts of life, or to present a literal transcript of its sordid and inessential details with the "realist." The superficial roughness and apparent negligence of the style can only blind the least critical reader to its essential finish, its secret and sustained art. The chief characters in these stories are conceived and portrayed with wonderful strength and delicacy. Tom Baynes is drawn with the hand of a master; he is so simple,

so thoroughly a seaman, so candid in admitting his weaknesses, so ignorant of the imaginative sympathy and insight with which he is dowered, so unconscious that with familiar words, with illustrations ostensibly crude, but in truth quaintly apt and original, he is quietly unlocking mysteries of human nature which to mere cleverness and culture must always remain sealed. Anthony Lee with his mulish obstinacy, his chattering vanity, his utter earthliness; and Cain the Puritanic hypocrite with the words of Scripture on his tongue, and lust and cruelty at his heart; and the kindly Parson Gale, equally interested in conger-fishing and the study of the stars in their courses; and the Ballachrink, mooning about in bland befuddlement, but yet loving the prattle of children better than the cannikin's clink; and Nelly Quine, coy and capricious, but tender and true to the core; and Rose, the strange girl, whose heart is closed to her lovers and all the passion of whose nature is absorbed by her joy in the storm-wind and the flying rack and the revel of the surges; and Tom Baynes' mother, the grim, sharp-tongued woman whose tenderness seemed withered when her husband died, but who breaks down so touchingly as she watches the agony of her son—these, to name but these—are not commonplace creations—they are figures worthy to appear in the character-gallery of a great novelist. They are placed in situations which take hold once and for ever on the memory. You cannot forget the drowning of Captain Hugh, as he scorns to clutch the rope flung to him by his rival; nor the rescue of Nelly from the breaking yacht; nor Tom Baynes in his night of agony on the beach, forsaken of all save the old black collie;

nor the meetings of the boy and girl lovers, Tommy Gelling and Nelly Quine ; nor Christmas Rose in the boat, exulting in the thunder and the breakers, and forgetful of the lad who lies dying at her feet. The writer is wonderfully close to nature. As you read his lines, you can see the mist creeping up the Sound ; you can feel the first hot gust before the thunder ; you can catch the steam from the hay and the scent from the water-meadows ; you can hear the bees humming round the golden gorse, and the wavelets murmuring in the soft-coloured eventide. His narrative verse swings along with a catching rhythm of its own, and his language is always direct and clear. His work may be studied again and again, so richly is it stored with the fruits of long experience and keen observation, so true is the passion with which it is charged, so close is its literary texture. He is one of the few writers who can pierce below the surface of life without exploring its noisome recesses. To show that he has the lyrical as well as the narrative faculty, it is enough to point to his simple, musical lines on "May Margery of Linton."

WALTER WHYTE.

FO'C'SLE YARNS.

1873.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN.

BETSY LEE.

I.

The narrator of "Betsy Lee" is a Manxman and a sailor, named Tom Baynes. He opens his story by telling of the days when he played as a boy on the shores of the Isle of Man, and had as his playmate Betsy Lee, the daughter of a neighbouring fisherman.

AH! it wouldn't be bad for some of us
If we'd never gone further and never fared wuss;
If we'd never grown up, and never got big,
If we'd never took the brandy swig,
If we were skippin and scamp'rin and cap'rin still
On the sand that lies below the hill,
Crunchin its grey ribs with the beat
Of our little patterin naked feet;
If we'd just kep childher upon the shore
For ever and ever and evermore.
Now the beauty of the thing when childher plays is
The terrible wonderful length the days is.
Up you jumps, and out in the sun,
And you fancy the day will never be done:
And you're chasin' the bumbees hummin' so cross
In the hot sweet air among the goss,
Or gath'rin blue-bells, or looking for eggs,
Or peltin the ducks with their yalla legs,
Or a-climbin, and nearly breakin your skulls,

Or a-shoutin for divilment after the gulls,
Or a-thinkin of nothin, but down at the tide,
Singin out for the happy you feel inside.
That's the way with the kids, you know,
And the years do come and the years do go,
And when you look back it's all like a puff,
Happy and over and short enough.

Well I never took notions on Betsy Lee,
Nor no more did she, I suppose, on me,
Till one day diggin upon the sand—
Gibbers,¹ of course you'll understand,
A lad as was always a cheeky young sprout,
Began a-pullin of Betsy about ;
And he worried the wench till her shoulders were bare,
And he slipped the knot of her beautiful hair,
And down it came, as you may say,
Just like a shower of golden spray,
Blown this way and that by a gamesome breeze,
And a rip-rip-rippin down to her knees.
I looked at Betsy—aw dear ! how she stood !
A quiv'rin all over, and her face like blood !
And her eyes all wet with tears, like fire,
And her breast a-swellin higher and higher ;
And she gripped her sickle with a twitchy feel,
And her thumb started out like a coil of steel,
And a cloud seemd to pass from my eyes, and a glory
Like them you'll see painted sometimes in a story,
Breathed out from her skin ; and I saw her no more
The child I had always thought her before,
But wrapped in the glory, and wrapped in the hair,
Every inch of a woman stood pantin there.

So I ups with my fist, as I was bound,
And one for his nob, and knocks him down,
But from that day by land and sea,
I loved her ! oh, I loved her ! my Betsy Lee !

It's a terrible thing is love—did you say ?

Well, Edward, my lad, I'll not say nay.

But you don't think of that when the young heart blows
Leaf by leaf, comin out like a rose,
And your sheets is slacked off, and your blood is a-prancin,
And the world seems a floor for you to dance on.

Terrible—eh ? yes, yes ! you're right,
But all the same it's God's own light.

And there was something worth loving in her

As neat as a bird and as straight as a fir ;

And I've heard them say as she passed by,

It was like another sun slipped into the sky—

Kind to the old and kind to the young,

With a smile on her lip and a laugh on her tongue,

With a heart to feel and a head to choose,

And she stood just five feet four in her shoes.

Oh, I've seen her look—well, well, I'll stop it !

Oh, I've seen her turn—well, well, then ! drop it !

Seen, seen ! What, what ! All under the sod

The darlin lies now—my God ! my God ! ”

II.

The years slip away, and all goes well until the news is brought to the island that old Lee has inherited a small fortune. The bearer of the tidings is a rascally lawyer's clerk, called Taylor, who determines to make Betsy his wife. For a time, however, he fails to separate her from her lover :—

“ Now heave ahead, my lads, with me

For the weeks rolled on, and ould Anthony Lee

Did just what he always wanted to do,
For he took a farm they called the *Brew*,
In a hollow that lay at the foot of a hill,
Where the blessed ould craythur might have his fill
Of stockin and rearin and grassin and tillage,
And only about a mile from the village.
And a stream ran right through the orchard and then
Went dancin and glancin down the glen,
And soaked through the shilly, and out to the bay,
But never forgot, as it passed, to say,
With the ringin laugh of its silv'ry flow—
'She's thinkin of you and she tould me so.
Laugh on, my hearties ! you'll do no harm ;
But I've stood when the wind blew straight from the
farm,
And I've felt her spirit draw nigher and nigher,
Till it shivered into my veins like fire,
And every ripple and every rock
Seemed swep with the hem of Betsy's frock.

* * * * *

Well, mostly every ev'rin, you see,
I was up at the milkin, with Betsy Lee.
For when she was milkin, she was always singin ;
I don't know what it was—maybe the ringin
Of the milk comin tearin into the can,
With a swish and a swelsh and a tartaran,
A-makin what the lawyer gent
Was callin a sort of *accompliment*.
But the look of a cow is enough to do it.
And her breath, and her neck, the way she'll slew it—
As if she was sayin, the patient she stood,
'Milk away ! it's doin me good.'

And the sun goin down, and the moon comin up,
And maybe you takin a little sup,
And the steam of the hay, and your forehead pressin
Agin her round side ! but for all it's a blessin
When they're nice and quiet, for there's some of them
rough,
And kicky and pushy and bould enough.
Now Betsy would sing and I would hear,
And away I'd be like a hound or a deer,
Up the glen and through the sedges,
And bless me the way I took the hedges !
For I'd be wantin to get in time to the place
To see the last sunlight on Betsy's face.
And when I'd be gettin a-top of the brew²
Where ould Anthony's house was full in view,
Then I'd stop and listen till I got it right,
And answer it back with all my might,
And when I came down she'd say—'I heard.
You're for all the world like a mockin'-bird.'

* * * * *

Aye, aye ! the sea for the leks of us !
It's God's own work (though treacherous !)
But for peace and rest and that—d'ye see ?
Among the cows is the place for me.

And Betsy speakin so soft and low,
And speakin nothin at all, you know ;
And singin hymns, no matter what,
'Gentle Jesus,' and the like o' that.
And that's the way she was one night,

Pressed to my heart as tight as tight,—
'Sing *Glory be!*' the darlin said,
'And then it'll be time to be goin to bed'—
When all of a sudden at the door
Come a clatterin of elogs, and there for sure
Stood Peggy, the sarvant, all out o' breath,
And 'You're wanted,' says she, 'Miss Elizabeth !'
So I got up, and I was goin too ;
'Aw, no !' says Peggy, 'that'll never do !'
And she went—and she went—and my heart gave a shiver,
And I never saw her again ! no never ! never !"

III.

The same night Baynes is told by old Lee that a girl of the neighbourhood, Jenny Magee, has declared him to be the father of her child. He vainly protests that he is innocent, and demands to see his sweetheart once more. His accuser, who is a tool of the villain Taylor, repeats her falsehood, despite the efforts of Parson Gale to get at the truth. Even Baynes' mother turns against him, and urges him to marry Jenny:—

" 'Hush ! mawther !' I says, 'aw, mawther, hush !'
And she turned to the fire, and I saw her brush
The tears from her eyes, and I saw the workin
Of her back, and her body jerkin, jerkin :
And I went, and I never said nothin lek,
But I put my arm around her neck,
And I looked in her face, and the shape and the strent',³
And the very face itself had went
All into one like a sudden thaw,
Slished and slushed, or the way you've saw

The water bubblin and swirlin around
The place where a strong man have gone down.
And I took her and put her upon the bed
Like a little child, and her poor ould head
On my breast, and I hushed her, and stroked her cheek,
Talkin little talk—the way they speak
To babies—I did ! and then I begun
To think of yandhar Absalun,
And David cryin ‘ My son, my son ! ’
And the moon come round, and the light shone in,
And crep on her face, and I saw the thin
She was, and the wore, and her neck all dried
And shrivelled up like strips of hide ;
And I thought of the time it was as warm
And as soft as Betsy’s, and her husband’s arm
Around it strong and lovin, and we
A cuddled up and a suckin free.
And I cried like Peter in the Testament,
When Jesus looked at him, and out he went
And cried like a fool, and the cock a-crowin,
But what there was in his heart there’s no knowin.
And I swore by the livin God above
I’d pay her back, and love for love,
And keep for keep, and the wages checked,
And her with a note, and all correct.
Then I kissed her and she never stirred ;
And I took my clothes, and, without a word,
I snicked the door, and by break o’ the day
I was standing alone on Douglas quay.”

Baynes “ ships foreign,” and is absent for two years from the island. On his return he learns that Taylor persuaded the Lees that he had been drowned at sea :—

“ And Betsy, be sure, heard all before long,
They took care of that, and then ding-dong,

Night and day the ould people was at her—
And would she marry Taylor ? and chitter-chatter !
And never a word from Betsy Lee,
But ‘It cannot be ! it cannot be !’
And thinner and thinner every day,
And paler and paler, I’ve heard them say ;
And always doin the work and goin,
And early and late, and them never knowin,
For all they thought themselves so wise,
That the gal was dyin under their eyes ;
And —‘Take advice, and marry him now !
A rael good husband anyhow.’
And allis the one against the three—
And ‘It cannot be ! it cannot be.’

One night he was there, and words ran high—
Ould Peggy was tellin—and ‘Let me die !’
She says—‘Let me die ! let me die !’ she said,
And they took her upstairs and put her to bed,
And the doctor come—I knew him well,
And he knew me—ould Doctor Bell—
A nice ould man, but hard on the drink,
And the fond of Betsy you wouldn think !
He used to say, but he’d never say more,
Her face was like one he’d seen afore.
Aw that’s the man that had supped his fill
Of troubles, mind ! but cheerful still,
And a big strong man ; and he’d often say,
‘Well, Thomas, my lad, and when’s the day ?’
And ‘would I be axin him up to the feed ?’
The day indeed ! the day indeed !
So he went up all alone to see her,
For Betsy wouldn have nobody there,

Excep' himself: and them that was standin
And houldin their breaths upon the landin
Could hear her talkin very quick,
And the Doctor's voice uncommon thick—
But what was said betwix them too
That time, there was none of them ever knew :
God knows and *him* ; but the nither⁴ will tell.
Ay, he was safe to trust was Doctor Bell.
But when he came down—'Is she raelly dyin ?'
Ould Anthony said ; but the Doctor was cryin.
And—' Doctor ! Doctor ! what can it be ? '
' It's only a broken heart,' says he ;
And—*he'd come again another day*—
And he took his glass, and went away.

And when the winter time came round,
And the snow lyin deep upon the ground,
One mornin early the mother got up
To see how she was, and give her a sup
Of tea or the like—and—mates—hould on !
Betsy was gone ; aye, Betsy was gone !

' Gentle Jesus, meek and mild !

Look upon a little child !

Pity my simplicity !

Suffer me to come to Thee ! '

That's the words I've heard her sing,
When she was just a little prattlin thing.
And I raelly don't think in my heart that ever
She was different from that—no never !

Aw, He'd pity her simplicity !

A child to God ! a woman to me !

' Gentle Jesus ! ' the sound is sweet,

Like you'll hear the little lammies bleat !

⁴ Neither of them.

'Gentle Jesus !' well, well, well !

And once I thought—but who can tell !

Come, give us a drop of drink ! the stuff

A man will put out when he's dry ! that's enough.

To hear me talkin religion—eh ?

You must have thought it strange?—*You didn—ye say ?*

You didn ? No ! What ? you didn—*you !*

Well, that'll do, my lads ; that'll do, that'll do.

Robert Earl of Lytton.

1831—1892.

EDWARD ROBERT BULWER LYTTON, the son of Lord Lytton, statesman, novelist, playwright, and poet, was born in Hertford Street, London, on November 18th, 1831. He was educated at Harrow, and afterwards studied at Bonn. He entered the diplomatic service before he was twenty, and in 1849 acted as attaché and private secretary to his uncle, Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, at Washington. He was appointed Secretary of Legation at Florence in 1852, and held the same post at Paris in 1854, at The Hague in 1856, at St. Petersburg and Constantinople in 1858, at Vienna in 1859, and at Belgrade in 1860. Under the pseudonym of "Owen Meredith," he published "*Clytemnestra and Other Poems*" in 1855, "*The Wanderer*" in 1859, and "*Lucile*," a story of contemporary life told in verse, in 1860. "*Lucile*" gained considerable popularity, and was followed in 1861 by "*Tannhauser, or the Battle of the Bards*," which was written by "Owen Meredith" in conjunction with Julian Fane. "*The Ring of Amasis*," a sombre, fantastic prose romance, which has since been recast and republished, appeared in 1863. In the following year its author married Edith, a daughter of the Honourable Edward Villiers. He was Secretary of Legation at Athens in 1864, at Lisbon in 1865, at Madrid in 1868, at Vienna in 1869, and at Paris in 1873. He published a

memoir of Julian Fane, and "Serbski Pesme," versions of Servian songs and ballads in 1871, and "Fables in Song" in 1873. He succeeded to the title Baron Lytton on his father's death in 1873; and in 1874 was sent as English Ambassador to Lisbon. In 1876 he received the Grand Cross of the Bath, and was appointed Viceroy of India. During his viceroyalty, the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India at Delhi in 1877, and the last Afghan War broke out in 1879. Lord Lytton's rule in the East gave rise to a bitter political controversy, with the rights and wrongs of which we are not here called upon to deal. He resigned in 1880 on the fall of the Beaconsfield Government, and was made Earl of Lytton on his return to England. He published an instalment of his father's biography in 1883; "Glenaveril," a novel in verse, 1885; and "After Paradise; or Legends of Exile," in 1887. He was appointed English Ambassador at Paris in 1887.

Earl Lytton has worked as a lyricist, as a satirist, and as a narrative poet. He has written long stories of contemporary life in verse, and allegorical poems of which the scenes are laid in Olympus and in the wilderness outside Eden. His early works display a knowledge of the world which is rarely found in so young a writer, but of which the writer is too complacently conscious. He shows remarkable skill in the difficult art of telling a story in verse; the complicated plot of "Glenaveril" is unravelled with supreme dexterity in a perfectly lucid narrative couched in *ottava rima*. In his allegoric poems the symbolism is seldom obscure, and often impressive and significant. The finest of the "Legends" tells how Adam, newly driven into exile, implores the

Archangel who guards its gates to obliterate his recollection of Paradise. The Archangel complies:—

“Then with decisive hand

He seized and drew his formidable sword.

Through night's black bosom burn'd the plunging brand,

Two-edgèd fires, the lightnings of the Lord,

Flashed from its fervid blade, below, above.

And when their brilliance through the darkness broke,

Clear from the zenith to the nadir clove

Man's sundered universe. At one dread stroke

The Archangelic sword had hewn in twain

The substance of Eternity. . . .

. . . Upon the night-bound plain

In two vast fragments, each a dim surmise,

Eternity had fallen—one part towards man,

The other part towards man's lost Paradise.”

Thereafter, although Eve transmits a dim memory of the past to her daughters, man has no recollection of Paradise:—

“Yet still the search is sweet, albeit in vain ;

It lasts for ever, and men call it Love.”

The “Legends” are Lord Lytton's highest effort. They are not likely to secure so many readers as “Lucile” or “Glenaveril,” but they contain their author's most original thoughts and reveal him at his best as an artist in verse. As the above passage shows, they are couched in decasyllabic lines, with rhymes recurring several times at irregular intervals—a somewhat difficult metrical form which Lord Lytton has successfully handled. In his renderings of the Servian ballads he displays a mastery of flowing and spirited verse. Take, for example, the description of the Turkish host advancing to the great fight at Kossovo:—

“Eastward and westward, and southward and nor'ward,

Scaling the hillside, and scathing the gorse,

Horsemen to horsemen, and horse against horse ;

Lances like forests when forests are black ;
Standards like clouds flying backward and forward,
White tents like snowdrifts piled up at the back.
The rain may in torrents fall down out of heaven,
But never the earth will it reach :
Nothing but horsemen, nothing but horses,
Thick as the sands which the wild river courses
Leave, after tempest, in heaps on the beach.
Murad for pasture hath given
To his horsemen the plain of Mazquite.
Lances a-ripple all over the land,
Tost like the bearded and billowy wheat
By the winds of the mountain driven.”—

Lord Lytton has been accused of borrowing too freely from other writers, and the accusation has not been invariably groundless. In writing “*Lucile*” he owed more to *Georges Sand* than one writer should owe to another, and his lines frequently recall the work of greater masters. A number of his lyrics are palpable imitations of *Browning’s*. But they are to *Browning’s* verse as the footlights are to sunlight and as rosewater is to wine. They breathe not of the open air but of the dress-circle and the boudoir. In occasionally echoing the rhythm and mimicking the sentiment of other men, Lord Lytton has done wanton injustice to his talents. He had more than culture and wit and knowledge of the world and the command of an easy and finished style. He was more than a light-handed satirist and a masterly teller of a story. That he had a true vein of poetry, a strain and a message of his own, he has proved by the lofty imagery of his “*Legends*” and by more than one love-lyric where the language and the rhythm are unborrowed, and the thought and the passion are beautiful and moving and sincere.

WALTER WHYTE.

POEMS.

ROBERT EARL OF LYTTON.

I.—TEARS.

(FROM "GLENAVERIL.")

THERE be three hundred different ways and more
Of speaking, but of weeping only one ;
And that one way, the wide world o'er and o'er,
Is known by all, tho' it is taught by none.
No man is master of this ancient lore,
And no man pupil. Every simpleton
Can weep as well as every sage. The man
Does it no better than the infant can.

The first thing all men learn is how to speak,
Yet understand they not each other's speech ;
But tears are neither Latin, nor yet Greek,
Nor prose, nor verse. The language that they teach
Is universal. Cleopatra's cheek
They decked with pearls no richer than from each
Of earth's innumerable mourners fall
Unstudied, yet correctly classical.

Tears are the oldest and the commonest
Of all things upon earth ; and yet how new
The tale each time told by them ! How unblessed
Were life's hard way without their heavenly dew !
Joy borrows them from grief : faith trembles lest
She lose them : even Hope herself smiles thro'
The rainbow they make round her as they fall :
And Death, that cannot weep, sets weeping all.

II.—THE PORTRAIT.

MIDNIGHT past! Not a sound of aught
Thro' the silent house, but the wind at his
prayers.

I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman upstairs.

A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were dripping yet;
And the moon look'd forth, as tho' in pain,
With her face all white and wet:

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
But the friend of my bosom, the man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.

Nobody else in the country place
All round, that knew of my loss beside,
But the good young Priest with the Raphael-face,
Who confess'd her when she died.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
And my grief had moved him beyond control;
For his lip grew white, as I could observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
I thought of the pleasant days of yore:
I said, "The staff of my life is gone:
The woman I loved is no more.

"On her cold, dead bosom my portrait lies,
Which next to her heart she used to wear—
Haunting it o'er with her tender eyes
When my own face was not there.

"It is set all round with rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might have kept,
For each ruby there, my heart hath bled :
For each pearl my eyes have wept."

And I said—"The thing is precious to me :
They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay ;
It lies on her heart, and lost must be,
If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
And crept up the stairs that creak'd for fright,
Till into the chamber of death I came,
Where she lay all in white.

The moon shone over her winding sheet.
There, stark she lay on her carven bed ;
Seven burning tapers about her feet,
And seven about her head.

As I stretch'd my hand, I held my breath ;
I turn'd as I drew the curtains apart :
I dared not look on the face of death :
I knew where to find her heart.

I thought, at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warm'd that heart to life, with love ;
For the thing I touched was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

'Twas the hand of a man, that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead,—from the other side :
And at once the sweat broke over my brow,
"Who is robbing the corpse ?" I cried.

Opposite me, by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,

Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

"What do you here, my friend?" . . . The man
Look'd first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here," he began;
"There is. It is mine," I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, "Yours, no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

"This woman she loved me well," said I.
"A month ago," said my friend to me:
"And in your throat," I groan'd, "you lie!"
He answer'd . . . "Let us see."

"Enough!" I return'd, "let the dead decide:
And whose soever the portrait prove,
His shall it be, when the cause is tried,
Where Death is arraign'd by Love."

We found the portrait there, in its place:
We open'd it by the tapers' shine:
The gems were all unchanged: the face
Was—neither his nor mine.

"One nail drives out another, at least!
The face of the portrait there," I cried,
"Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,
Who confess'd her when she died."

The setting is all of rubies red,
And pearls which a Peri might have kept.
For each ruby there my heart hath bled:
For each pearl my eyes have wept.

III.—A LOVE LETTER.

MY love,—my chosen,—but not mine ! I send
My whole heart to thee in these words I write ;
So let the blotted lines, my soul's sole friend,
Lie upon thine, and there be blest at night.

This flower, whose bruised purple blood will stain
The page now wet with the hot tears that fall—
(Indeed, indeed, I struggle to restrain
This weakness, but the tears come, spite of all !)

I pluck'd it from the branch you used to praise,
The branch that hides the wall. I tend your flowers,
I keep the paths we paced in happier days.
How long ago they seem, those pleasant hours !

The white laburnum's out. Your Judas-tree
Begins to shed those crimson buds of his.
The nightingales sing—ah, too joyously !
Who says those birds are sad ? I think there is

That in the books we read, which deeper wrings
My heart, so they lie dusty on the shelf.
Ah me, I meant to speak of other things
Less sad. In vain ! they bring me to myself.

I know your patience. And I would not cast
New shade on days so dark as yours are grown
By weak and wild repining for the past,
Since it is past for ever, O mine own !

For hard enough the daily cross you bear,
Without that deeper pain reflection brings ;
And all too sore the fretful household care,
Free of the contrast of remember'd things.

But ah ! it little profits, that we thrust
From all that's said, what both must feel, unnamed
Better to face it boldly, as we must.
Than feel it in silence, and be shamed.

Irene, I have loved you, as men love
Light, music, odour, beauty, love itself;—
Whatever is apart from, and above
Those daily needs which deal with dust and pelf.

And I had been content, without one thought
Our guardian angels could have blushed to know,
So to have lived and died, demanding nought
Save, living, dying, to have loved you so.

My youth was orphan'd, and my age will be
Childless. I have no sister. None, to steal
One stray thought from the many thoughts of thee,
Which are the source of all I think and feel.

My wildest wish was vassal to thy will :
My haughtiest hope, a pensioner on thy smile,
Which did with light my barren being fill,
As moonlight glorifies some desert isle.

I never thought to know what I have known,—
The rapture, dear, of being loved by you :
I never thought, within my heart, to own
One wish so blest that you should share it too :

Nor ever did I deem, contemplating
The many sorrows in this place of pain,
So strange a sorrow to my life could cling,
As, being thus loved, to be beloved in vain.

But now we know the best, the worst. We have
Interr'd, and prematurely, and unknown,
Our youth, our hearts, our hopes, in one small grave,
Whence we must wander, widow'd, to our own,

And if we comfort not each other, what
Shall comfort us, in the dark days to come ?
Not the light laughter of the world, and not
The faces and the firelight of fond home.

And so I write to you ; and write, and write,
For the mere sake of writing to you, dear.
What can I tell you, that you know not ? Night
Is deepening thro' the rosy atmosphere

About the lonely casement of this room,
Which you have left familiar with the grace
That grows where you have been. And on the gloom
I almost fancy I can see your face.

Not pale with pain, and tears restrain'd for me,
As when I last beheld it ; but as first,
A dream of rapture and of poesy,
Upon my youth, like dawn on dark, it burst.

Perchance I shall not ever see again
That face. I know that I shall never see
Its radiant beauty as I saw it then,
Save by this lonely lamp of memory,

With childhood's starry graces lingering yet
I' the rosy orient of young womanhood ;
And eyes like woodland violets newly wet ;
And lips that left their meaning in my blood !

I will not say to you what I might say
To one less worthily loved, less worthy love.
I will not say . . . "Forget the past. Be gay.
And let the all ill-judging world approve

"Light in your eyes, and laughter on your lip."
I will not say . . . "Dissolve in thought forever
Our sorrowful, but sacred, fellowship."
For that would be, to bid you, dear, dis sever

Your nature from its nobler heritage
In consolations register'd in heaven,
For griefs this world is barren to assuage,
And hopes to which, on earth, no home is given.

But I would whisper, what for evermore
My own heart whispers thro' the wakeful night, . . .
"This grief is but a shadow, flung before,
From some refulgent substance out of sight."

Wherefore it happens, in this riddling world,
That, where sin came not, sorrow yet should be ;
Why heaven's most hurtful thunders should be hurl'd
At what seems noblest in humanity ;

And we are punish'd for our purest deeds,
And chasten'd for our holiest thoughts ; . . . alas !
There is no reason found in all the creeds, [pass.
Why these things are, nor whence they come to

But in the heart of man, a secret voice
There is, which speaks, and will not be restrain'd,
Which cries to Grief . . . "Weep on, while I rejoice,
Knowing that, somewhere, all will be explain'd."

I will not cant that commonplace of friends,
Which never yet hath dried one mourner's tears,
Nor say that grief's slow wisdom makes amends
For broken hearts and desolated years.

For who would barter all he hopes from life,
To be a little wiser than his kind ?
Who arm his nature for continued strife,
Where all he seeks for hath been left behind ?

But I would say, O pure and perfect pearl
Which I have dived so deep in life to find,
Lock'd in my heart thou liest. The wave may curl,
The wind may wail above us. Wave and wind,

What are their storm and strife to me and you ?
No strife can mar the pure heart's inmost calm.
This life of ours, what is it ? A very few
Soon-ended years, and then,—the ceaseless psalm,

And the eternal sabbath of the soul !
Hush ! . . . while I write, from the dim Carmine
The midnight angelus begins to roll,
And float athwart the darkness up to me.

My messenger (a man by danger tried)
Waits in the courts below ; and ere our star
Upon the forehead of the dawn hath died,
Beloved one, this letter will be far

Athwart the mountain, and the mist, to you.
I know each robber hamlet. I know all
This mountain people. I have friends, both true
And trusted, sworn to aid whate'er befall.

I have a bark upon the gulf. And I,
If to my heart I yielded in this hour,
Might say . . . "Sweet fellow-sufferer, let us fly!
I know a little isle which doth embower

"A home where exiled angels might forbear
A while to mourn for Paradise." . . . But no!
Never, whate'er fate now may bring us, dear,
Shalt thou reproach me for that only woe

Which even love is powerless to console;
Which dwells where duty dies: and haunts the tomb
Of life's abandon'd purpose in the soul;
And leaves to hope, in heaven itself, no room.

Man cannot make, but may ennoble, fate,
By nobly bearing it. So let us trust
Not to ourselves but God, and calmly wait
Love's orient, out of darkness and of dust.

Farewell, and yet again farewell, and yet
Never farewell,—if farewell mean to fare
Alone and disunited. Love hath set
Our days, in music, to the selfsame air;

And I shall feel, wherever we may be,
Even tho' in absence and an alien clime,
The shadow of the sunniness of thee,
Hovering, in patience, through a clouded time.

Farewell! The dawn is rising, and the light
Is making, in the east, a faint endeavour
To illuminate the mountain peaks. Good night.
Thine own, and only thine, my love, for ever.

IV.—MADAME LA MARQUISE.

THE folds of her wine-dark violet dress
Glow over the sofa, fall on fall,
As she sits in the air of her loveliness
With a smile for each and for all.

Half of her exquisite face in the shade
Which o'er it the screen in her soft hand flings :
Thro' the gloom glows her hair in its odorous braid :
In the firelight are sparkling her rings.

As she leans,—the slow smile half shut up in her eyes
Beams the sleepy, long, silk-soft lashes beneath ;
Thro' her crimson lips, stirr'd by her faint replies,
Breaks one gleam of her pearl-white teeth.

As she leans,—where your eye, by her beauty subdued,
Droops—from under warm fringes of broidery white
The slightest of feet—silken-slipper'd protrude,
For one moment then slip out of sight.

As I bend o'er her bosom, to tell her the news,
The faint scent of her hair, the approach of her cheek,
The vague warmth of her breath, all my senses suffuse
With HERSELF : and I tremble to speak.

So she sits in the curtain'd luxurious light,
Of that room with its porcelain, and pictures, and flowers,
When the dark day's half done, and the snow flutters white,
Past the windows in feathery showers.

All without is so cold,—'neath the low leaden sky !
Down the bald, empty street, like a ghost the gend'arme
Stalks surly : a distant carriage hums by :—
All within is so bright and so warm !

Here we talk of the schemes and the scandals of court,
How the courtesan pushes: the charlatan thrives.
We put horns on the heads of our friends, just for sport :
Put intrigues in the heads of their wives.

Her warm hand, at parting so strangely thrill'd mine
That at dinner I scarcely remark what they say,—
Drop the ice in my soup, spill the salt in my wine,
Then go yawn at my favourite play.

But she drives after noon : then's the time to behold her,
With her fair face half hid, like a ripe peeping rose,
'Neath that veil,—o'er the velvets and furs which en-
Leaning back with a queenly repose,— [fold her,

As she glides up the sunlight ! You'd say she was made
To loll back in a carriage, all day, with a smile ;
And, at dusk, on a sofa, to lean in the shade
Of soft lamps, and be woo'd for a while.

Could we find out her heart thro' that velvet and lace ?
Can it beat without ruffling her sumptuous dress ?
She will show us her shoulder, her bosom, her face ;
But what the heart's like we must guess.

With live women and men to be found in the world—
(—Live with sorrow and sin,—live with pain and
with passion,—)

Who could live with a doll, tho' its locks should be
And its petticoats trimm'd in the fashion ? [curl'd,

'Tis so fair ! . . would my bite, if I bit it, draw blood ?
Will it cry if I hurt it ? or scold if I kiss ?
Is it made, with its beauty, of wax or of wood ?
. . . Is it worth while to guess at all this ?

V.—AUX ITALIENS.

AT Paris it was, at the Opera there ;—
And she look'd like a queen in a book that night,
With the wreath of pearl in her raven hair,
And the brooch on her breast, so bright.

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best, to my taste, is the *Trovatore* :
And Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow :
And who was not thrill'd in the strangest way,
As we heard him sing, while the gas burn'd low,
“*Non ti scordar di me*” ?

The Emperor there, in his box of state,
Look'd grave, as if he had just then seen
The red flag wave from the city-gate,
Where his eagle in bronze had been.

The Empress, too, had a tear in her eye.
You'd have said that her fancy had gone back again,
For one moment, under the old blue sky,
To the old glad life in Spain.

Well ! there in our front-row box we sat,
Together, my bride-betroth'd and I ;
My gaze was fix'd on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by.

And both were silent, and both were sad.
Like a queen, she lean'd on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had ;
So confident of her charm !

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
Of her former lord, good soul that he was !
Who died the richest, and roundest of men,
The Marquis of Carabas.

I hope that, to get to the kingdom of heaven,
Thro' a needle's eye he had not to pass.
I wish him well, for the jointure given
To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love,
As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
When we stood, 'neath the cypress trees, together
In that lost land, in that soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather :

Of that muslin dress (for the eve was hot)
And her warm white neck in its golden chain :
And her full, soft hair, just tied in a knot,
And falling loose again :

And the jasmin-flower in her fair young breast :
(O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmin-flower !)
And the one bird singing alone to his nest :
And the one star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife ;
And the letter that brought me back my ring.
And it all seem'd then, in the waste of life,
Such a very little thing !

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
Which the sentinel cypress tree stands over.
And I thought . . . "Were she only living still,
How I could forgive her, and love her !"

And I swear, as I thought of her thus, in that hour,
And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmin-flower,
Which she used to wear in her breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
It made me creep, and it made me cold !
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
Where a mummy is half unroll'd.

And I turn'd, and look'd. She was sitting there
In a dim box, over the stage : and drest
In that muslin dress, with that full soft hair,
And that jasmin in her breast !

I was here : and she was there :
And the glittering horse-shoe curved between :—
From my bride-betroth'd, with her raven hair,
And her sumptuous, scornful mien.

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
And over her primrose face the shade,
(In short from the Future back to the Past)
There was but a step to be made.

To my early love from my future bride
One moment I look'd. Then I stole to the door.
I traversed the passage ; and down at her side,
I was sitting, a moment more.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
Or something which never will be expressed,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
With the jasmin in her breast.

She is not dead, and she is not wed !
But she loves me now, and she loved me then !
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
And but for her . . . well, we'll let that pass,
She may marry whomever she will.

But I will marry my own first love,
With her primrose face : for old things are best ;
And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.

The world is fill'd with folly and sin,
And Love must cling where it can, I say :
For beauty is easy enough to win ;
But one isn't loved every day.

And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back and be forgiven.

But O the smell of that jasmin-flower !
And O that music ! and O the way
That voice rang out from the donjon tower
Non ti scordar di me,
Non ti scordar di me !

VI.—AN EVENING IN TUSCANY.

LOOK ! the sun sets. Now's the rarest
Hour of all the blessed day,
(Just the hour, love, you look fairest ;)
Even the snails are out to play.
Cool the breeze mounts, like this Chianti
Which I drain down to the sun.
There ! shut up that old green Dante,—
Turn the page, where we begun
At the last news of Ulysses,—
A grand image, fit to close
Just such grand gold eves as this is,
Full of splendour and repose !
To loop up those long bright tresses,—
Only one or two must fall
Down your warm neck even in kisses
Through the soft curls spite of all.
Ah, but rest in your still place there !
Stir not—turn not ! the warm pleasure
Coming, going in your face there,
And the rose (no richer treasure)
In your bosom, like my love there,
Just half secret and half seen ;
And the soft light from above there
Streaming o'er you where you lean,
With your fair head in the shadow
Of that grass-hat's glancing brim,
Like a daisy in a meadow
Which its own deep fringes dim.
O you laugh,—you cry “ What folly ! ”
Yet you'd scarcely have me wise,
If I judge right, judging wholly
By the secret in your eyes.

But look down now, o'er the city
Sleeping soft among the hills,—
Our dear Florence ! That great Pitti
With its steady shadow fills
Half the town up : its unwinking
Cold white windows, as they glare
Down the long streets, set one thinking
Of the old Dukes who lived there ;
And one pictures those strange men so !—
Subtle brains, and iron thews !
There, the gardens of Lorenzo :—
The long cypress avenues
Creep up slow the stately hillside
Where the merry loungers are.
But far more I love this still side,—
The blue plain you see so far !
Where the shore of bright white villas
Leaves off faint ; the purple breadths
Of the olives and the willows
And the gold-rimmed mountain widths.
All transfused in slumbrous glory,
To one burning point—the sun
But up here, slow, cold, and hoary
Reach the olives one by one :
And the land looks fresh : the yellow
Arbuter-berries, here and there
Growing slowly ripe and mellow
Through a flush of rosy hair.
For the Tramontana last week
Was about ; 'tis scarce three weeks
Since the snow lay, one white vast streak
Upon those old purple peaks ;

So to-day among the grasses
One may pick up tens and twelves
Of young olives, as one passes
Blown about, and by themselves
Blackening sullen-ripe. The corn too
Grows each day from green to golden ;
The large-eyed wind-flowers forlorn too
Blow among it, un beholden :
Some of white, some crimson, others
Purple blackening to the heart.
From the deep wheat-sea which smothers
Their bright globes up, how they start !
And the small wild pinks, from tender
Feather-grasses peep at us.
While above them burns, on slender
Stems, the red gladiolus.
And the grapes are green : this season
They'll be round and sound and true,
If no after-blight should seize on
Those young bunches turning blue.
O that night of purple weather !
(Just before the moon had set)
You remember how together
We walked home ? The grass was wet.
The long grass in the Poderé—
With the balmy dew among it :
And that nightingale—the fairy
Song he sung—oh how he sung it !
And the fig-trees had grown heavy
With the young figs white and woolly
And the fire-flies, bevy on bevy
Of soft sparkles, pouring fully

Their warm life through trance on trances
Of thick citron shades behind,
Rose, like swarms of loving fancies,
Through some rich and pensive mind.
So we reached the loggia. Leaning
Faint, we sat there in the shade.
Neither spoke. The night's deep meaning
Filled the silence up unsaid.
Hoarsely through the cypress alley
A civetta out of tune
Tried his voice by fits. The valley
Lay all dark below the moon.
Until into song you burst out,—
That old song I made for you
When we found our rose, the first out—
Last sweet spring-time in the dew.
Well! . . . if things had gone less wildly—
Had I settled down before
There, in England, laboured mildly—
And been patient—and learned more
Of how men should live in London—
Been less happy—or more wise—
Left no great works tried, and undone—
Never looked in your soft eyes—
I . . . but what's the use of thinking?
There! our nightingale begins—
Now a rising note—now sinking
Back in little broken rings
Of warm songs that spread and eddy—
Now he picks up heart—and draws
His great music, slow and steady,
To a silver-centred pause!

Joseph Skipsey.

1832.

JOSEPH SKIPSEY was born near North Shields on the 17th of March, 1832:—his father, a leader among the miners of his time, was shot dead, it is believed accidentally, while attempting to restrain a police constable from firing upon the rioters at Chirton, North Shields, during the Tyneside pitmen's strike of that year, when the poet, who was the youngest of eight children, was but four months old. At seven years of age he entered the Percy Main coal-pits, near North Shields, where he had to work from twelve to fourteen hours a day, seldom, if ever, seeing the sun except on Sundays. Before leaving home he had acquired a knowledge of the letters of the alphabet; and, finding himself in charge of a trap-door used in connection with the ventilating of the mine, he procured a piece of chalk, and, with the aid of light obtained from occasional candle-ends, turned the trap-door into a blackboard, upon which he practised the formation of letters and words, and so taught himself to write and to read. Before he was eleven years old he had formed the design of committing the whole of the Bible to memory—a design in part carried out. A copy of Lindley Murray, given him by an aunt, turned his attention to grammar, and access to the works of Shakespeare, Milton, and Burns, stimulated the poetic fancy which,

from a child, had solaced him in the long weary hours of subterranean labour and the brief intervals of sunshine and fresh air. In 1859 he printed a few of his lyrics, which attracted attention and aroused interest, after which he left the mine, and became sub-storekeeper at the Gatestead Iron Works—an office he continued to hold until 1863, when he was made sub-librarian to the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle-on-Tyne. The smallness of the salary attached to this otherwise congenial office proving insufficient the poet reluctantly returned to the severer labour of the mine. In 1862 he issued a small volume entitled "The Reign of Gold, and Other Songs and Ballads," which was well noticed in the northern papers. This was followed in 1864 by "The Collier Lad, and Other Lyrics," the edition being limited to 200 copies, which were privately distributed. In 1871 appeared a volume of "Poems," of which only 300 copies were printed; but which obtained kindly notice in Newcastle and London, the *Spectator* and the *Athenæum* both giving it a favourable word. In 1878 he published "A Book of Miscellaneous Lyrics," which greatly extended his reputation. A copy of this was sent by the late Thomas Dixon to William Bell Scott, who wrote the poet in terms of congratulation and encouragement. A copy also fell into the hands of Dante Rossetti, who also communicated with the poet. A review of this volume, from the pen of Mr. Theodore Watts, appeared in the *Athenæum*, November 16th, 1878, and the miner-poet may be said to have been from thence fairly before the world. In 1880 he came to London on a visit to Mr. Dixon, who introduced him to Burne

Jones, William Morris, and Dante Rossetti. An evening in June 1880, spent at Cheyne Walk in the company of Thomas Dixon, Frederick Sheilds, Theodore Watts, and Dante Rossetti, became an ever-to-be-remembered experience in the life of the pitman-poet. In 1882 Mr. Skipsey was appointed caretaker to the Bentinck Board Schools, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and, while holding that office, prepared a lecture on "The Poet as Seer and Singer," since published (1890), which he delivered with great success before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle in 1883. Shortly after this he was invited to edit the since popular series of "Canterbury Poets," published by Walter Scott, Newcastle and London, and in this connection wrote several essays in 1884, the first six of the volumes, including those on Coleridge, Shelley, Blake, and Burns, being issued under his superintendence. Ill-health and want of proper leisure unfortunately compelled him to relinquish this eminently congenial work. Mr. Skipsey was for a short time (1888) in the service of the Durham College of Science, and later (1889) acted as Curator of Shakespeare's Birthplace. This, too, he was forced to give up, owing to the ill-health of his wife. Prior to this, however, in 1886, he had published his "Carols from the Coalfields, and Other Songs and Ballads"—a volume which was received with warm welcome alike by the public and the press. This, with his "Songs and Lyrics" (1892), a charming volume both in its appearance and contents, completes the list of the poet's works to date.

As will be seen from the foregoing the poet's life has been one of uninterrupted physical labour, some forty years having been spent in the pits, and the

remaining period in occupations involving constant manual effort, and leaving little or no leisure. That, in point of length, his poems are just such as might be expected to be produced under such circumstances, is true ; but surely, in point of character, no poems were ever less affected by the environment of their production. But a small proportion of them are devoted to mining subjects, and many of them are characterised by just those qualities which suggest culture,—quiet strength, reserve force, undoubted power under admirable restraint. Such verses as “Get Up” and “Mother Wept” are illustrations of this class. Of another kind take, for instance, the poem “The Violet and the Rose,” written in his youth, and characterised by Dante Rossetti as “very perfect.” Where is the evidence of the origin of this dainty lyric?—

“The Violet invited my kiss,—
I kiss’d it and called it my bride ;
‘Was ever one slighted like this?’
Sighed the Rose as it stood by my side.

“My heart ever open to grief,
To comfort the fair one I turned ;
‘Of fickle ones thou art the chief!’
Frown’d the Violet, and pouted and mourned.

“Then, to end all disputes, I entwined
The love-stricken blossoms in one ;
But that instant their beauty declined,
And I wept for the deed I had done !”

Independent as Mr. Skipsey’s work is of the circumstances under which it was produced, it is equally independent of the influence of other writers. “He has an intellectual, as well as a metrical,

affinity with Blake," wrote Mr. Oscar Wilde in reviewing the "Carols from the Coalfields," "and possesses something of Blake's marvellous power of making simple things seem strange to us, and strange things seem simple." But while Blake is the obvious parallel, such qualities as exist in both are clearly the result of undesigned coincidence, and not of imitative effort. Mr. Skipsey's poetry is characterised by simplicity, directness, and that rare and delicate condensation which suggests so much more than it says. These qualities he has employed upon a wide variety of subjects with equal facility. A dainty idea clothed in airy garments and lilting to a musical measure is a fair description of some of his lighter lyrics. Witness "A Merry Bee"—

"A golden bee a-cometh
O'er the mere, glassy mere,
And a merry tale he hummeth
In my ear.
"How he seized and kist a blossom,
From its tree, thorny tree,
Pluck'd and placed in Annie's bosom,
Hums the bee!"

But Mr. Skipsey is a man of many moods, to all of which he seems to be able to give felicitous expression. "He gives himself up freely to his impressions, and there is a fine, careless rapture in his laughter," says Mr. Oscar Wilde in the review already quoted. "Tit-for-tat" is a happy example of his humour:—

"Say, whither goes my buxom maid
All with the coal black e'e?
'Before I answer that,' she said,
'Give ear, and answer me.'

“ ‘Pray, hast thou e’er thy counsel kept ?’
‘Ay, and still can,’ said he :
‘And so can I,’ said she, and swept
A liltng o’er the lea.”

In contrast to these may be quoted “The Mysterious Rider” a “Symbol of the Mystery of Life” :—

“Upon a steed he came with speed,
The Day behind him breaking ;
And still he sped when Day o’erhead
Her last farewell was taking.
“ ‘Ah, whither fleest ?—Name thy goal !’
‘The dark from which I bounded !’
He spake and fled, and in my soul
The voice night-long resounded.”

“The Songstress” may represent another class of his charming lyrics :—

“Back flies my soul to other years,
When thou that charming lay repeatest,
When smiles were only chased by tears,
Yet sweeter far than smiles the sweetest.
“Thy music ends, and where are they ?
Those golden times by memory cherish’d ?
O, Syren, sing no more that lay,
Or sing till I like them have perish’d !”

But Mr. Skipsey is a dangerous man to begin to quote from, his lyrics lend themselves so readily for the purpose, and he has produced them in such variety. For the rest, therefore, we must refer the reader to the following pages, and to Mr. Skipsey’s own books. Though in matters of technique exception may be taken to some of his earlier efforts, it is clear that time and experience have given him a greater mastery of form, and, what is really remarkable, have not robbed him of spontaneity in doing so.

ALFRED H. MILES.

LYRICS OF THE COAL-FIELDS.

JOSEPH SKIPSEY.

I.—WILLY TO JINNY.

DUSKIER than the clouds that lie
’Tween the coal-pit and the sky,
Lo, how Willy whistles by
Right cheery from the colliree.

Duskier might the laddie be,
Save his coaxing coal-black e’e,
Nothing dark could Jinny see
A-coming from the colliree.

II.—O! SLEEP,

O SLEEP, my little baby ; thou
Wilt wake thy father with thy cries
And he into the pit must go,
Before the sun begins to rise.

He’ll toil for thee the whole day long,
And when the weary work is o’er,
He’ll whistle thee a merry song,
And drive the bogies from the door.

III.—GET UP.

“GET up !” the caller calls, “Get up !”
And in the dead of night,
To win the bairns their bite and sup,
I rise a weary wight.

My flannel dudden donn'd, thrice o'er
My birds are kiss'd, and then
I with a whistle shut the door,
I may not ope again.

IV.—THE STARS ARE TWINKLING.

THE stars are twinkling in the sky
As to the pit I go ;
I think not of the sheen on high,
But of the gloom below.

Not rest or peace, but toil and strife,
Do there the soul enthrall ;
And turn the precious cup of life
Into a cup of gall.

V.—THO' MASTER HAD GOLD.

THO' master had gold and treasures untold
And health were the all of my dower,
Yet my lowly lot would I barter not,
To vaunt of his riches and power.

His lady's too bold, a shrew and a scold,
And as black and as grim as a crow ;
While my own wee wife's the light of my life,
And queen of the roses in blow !

VI.—THE STAR AND THE METEOR.

DIRECTED by a little star,
I paced towards my own loved cot,
When rushed a meteor from afar,
And I my little guide forgot.

Bedazzled was I, and amazed
When out the meteor flashed, and I
Had never more my threshold paced,
Had not that star yet gleamed on high.

VII.—MY LITTLE BOY.

MY little boy, thy laughter
Goes to my bosom core,
And sends me yearning after
The days that are no more.

A-down my cheek is stealing
A briny tear, and I—
But let no selfish feeling
Thy infant mirth destroy.

Fill not with look so earnest,
Those pretty eyes of thine ;
A lot were thine the sternest,
Couldst thou my thought divine.

There's time enough for sorrow,
When Life's pale eve draws near ;
The lark lilts thee Good Morrow :
Ring out thy laughter clear !

VIII.—MOTHER WEPT.

MOTHER wept, and father sighed ;
With delight aglow
Cried the lad, "To-morrow," cried,
"To the pit I go."

Up and down the place he sped,—
Greeted old and young ;
Far and wide the tidings spread ;
Clapt his hands and sung.

Came his cronies ; some to gaze
Wrapt in wonder ; some
Free with counsel ; some with praise ;
Some with envy dumb.

“ May he,” many a gossip cried,
“ Be from peril kept.”
Father hid his face and sighed,
Mother turned and wept.

IX.—THE SINGER.

WHAT tho', in bleak Northumbria's mines,
His better part of life hath flown,
A planet's shone on him, and shines,
To fortune's darlings seldom known.

And while his outer lot is grim,
His soul, with light and rapture fraught,
Oft will a carol trill, or hymn
In deeper tones the deeper thought.

X—THE GOLDEN LOT.

IN the coal-pit, or the factory,
I toil by night and day,
And still to the music of labour
I lilt my heart-felt lay ;

I lilt my heart-felt lay—
And the gloom of the deep, deep mine,
Or the din of the factory dieth away,
And a Golden Lot is mine.

MISCELLANEOUS LYRICS.

JOSEPH SKIPSEY.

I.—LO, A FAIRY.

L O, a fairy on a day
Came and bore my heart away ;
But as she secured her prize,
Sweetest smiles illumed her eyes.
And, hey lerry O !

From that moment my career
Lay thro' dells and dingles, where
Pleasure blossom'd out of pain—
Where Joy sang her golden strain
Hey, hey, lerry O !

II.—THE SECRET.

T HE wind comes from the west to-night ;
So sweetly on my lips he bloweth,
My heart is thrill'd with pure delight,
From head to foot my body gloweth.
Where did the wind the magic find
To charm me thus ? say, heart that knoweth !
“ Within a rose on which he blows
Before upon thy lips he bloweth ! ”

III.—IN THE WILD GROVE.

I N the wild grove we wander'd,
And gay garlands made,
When ill-wise we ponder'd
On words in jest said.
And words, in jest spoken,
The garlands we wove,
And our two hearts had broken
Ere we left the grove.

IV.—NOT AS WONT.

“**W**E’LL meet no more as wont,” she said ;
And moons went by of keen regret,
Before once more beneath the shade
We met, where we so oft had met.

Till then in Life’s grim strife I’d kept
A heart unquelled, an eye unwet ;
But now like any child I wept—
We’d met, but not as wont we’d met.

V.—A REMEMBRANCE.

I STRAY ’neath a moon
In a blood-red cloud ;
And my heart to a tune
Is beating aloud—

Aloud to a tune,
One, now in a shroud,
Sang to me ’neath a moon
In a blood-red cloud.

VI.—WITH LOADED DICE.

WELL, thou with loaded dice hast won
The prize for which thou long hast played ;
And I am left with heart undone,
To mourn what gold galore outweighed.

Yet, on the heights thy feet go vaunt,
While in the vale I rue the past ;
The thought of one dark deed will haunt
And hurl thee at my feet at last.

VII.—THE FATAL ERRAND.

MY mother bade me go. I went :
But beat my heart, ere I returned,
A rat-tat-tan, and what it meant,
Too soon I to my sorrow learned.

Her errand to the youth I ran ;
But had she me some other bade,
I had not felt that rat-tat-tan,
Nor wept to think I ever had.

VIII.—THE BEE AND THE ROSE.

“YOU won’t !” the Rose’s accents ring ;
“I will !” the Golden Bee’s are ringing ;
And tho’ the winds, to aid her, spring,
Soon with the breeze-tost bloom he’s swinging.

His prize secured, away he goes,
At which anon, in rage the rarest ;
“Come back, thou villain !” cries the Rose ;
“Come once more kiss me, if thou darest !”

IX.—SEE, ESSIE GOES !

SEE, Essie goes !—and thou, proud rose,
Ah, where is now thy vain delight,
When round thee swung yon bee and sung,
No beauty matched thy beauty bright ?

Adown the close—see, Essie goes ;
And see, enchanted at the sight,
Around her swings yon bee and sings,
Her beauty mocks thy beauty bright !

X.—DAFFODIL AND DAISY.

A DORNED in many a gem this morn,
A daffodil without a peer,
I reared my head, and treat with scorn
A one-pearl-gifted daisy near.

That very hour, lo ! wind-a-rock'd,
Was I left gemless evermore ;
Nay, made to envy what I'd mock'd,
That one sweet pearl the daisy wore.

XI.—THE DEWDROP.

A H, be not vain. In yon flower-bell,
As rare a pearl, did I appear,
As ever grew in ocean shell,
To dangle at a Helen's ear.

So was I till a cruel blast
Arose and swept me to the ground,
When, in a jewel of the past,
Earth but a drop of water found.

XII.—THE PROUD ONE'S DOWN.

“ Q UEEEN Pearl's our equal—nay,
A fairer far am I,” May Dewdrop said,
As Sol at break of day
Did kiss the sparkler on her grass-blade bed.

“None may my charms resist !”
“None,” Sol still kissing answered, when alas !
The proud one turned to mist,
And with her pride did into Lethe pass.

Sir Edwin Arnold.

1832.

THE career of Sir Edwin Arnold is a striking example of the success which may be achieved in literature by a writer whose energies are largely exercised in occupations of a different kind. Though he has been on the editorial staff of the *Daily Telegraph* since 1861, and has been the actual editor for many years, he has yet been able not only to produce many volumes of verse, but to make a special study of Sanscrit literature, and also to travel in remote portions of the globe, and record in picturesque language what he has seen and heard. Owing to the comparative, if not the absolute, novelty of Eastern subjects to English readers, Sir Edwin Arnold has one notable advantage over most contemporary poets in the richness and freshness of the materials that he works into his verse. With such material as is afforded by the story of Buddha's life and teaching a first-rate artist might make first-rate work, and the same may be said of the materials furnished by the religion of Islâm which he has used in "*Pearls of the Faith*" (1883). The opinions of specialists have varied very much as to the adequacy of Sir Edwin Arnold's renderings of the great parables and stories of the East. But there appears to be a *consensus* of opinion that he is not entirely successful in his treatment of the writers of

Islâm. His chief mistake, both from the artistic point of view and the popular one, is that of introducing into his verse Oriental words which not only seem uncouth but are extremely unfamiliar to western eyes. Page after page of many of his Oriental poems bristles with Sanscrit proper names to which his readers are able to attach no meaning. If this pedantic display of learning has led the public to think that he poses for a poet on Oriental subjects alone, he has no one to blame but himself.

Oriental subjects have always had a remarkable fascination for European poets, both English and Continental. Although "*Les Orientales*" of Victor Hugo showed not much more than the ordinary knowledge of the subjects he dealt with, these splendid poems showed how deeply the poet had drank from that European Orientalism which had been so fashionable throughout the eighteenth century:—an Orientalism largely introduced into England by Sir William Jones. M. Leconte de Lisle, with very much more knowledge of Eastern literature, produced a volume of verse full of an Orientalism that was imbued with a large amount of true historic accuracy. Sir Edwin Arnold, however, has had much better opportunities of becoming the European interpreter of Oriental poetry than Hugo or Leconte de Lisle, or any English poet of eminence.

No one denies that the idea of the "great renunciation" which is the motive of "*The Light of Asia*" (1879) is Buddhistic. But some think that the impulse which drives Siddârtha to renounce everything, in order to soften the misery of human life, has in it more of the spirit of Christianity than of

Buddhism. Whatever may be its defects, there is no doubt that "The Light of Asia" is by far Sir Edwin's most important long poem, though it would be a mistake to suppose that he holds a high place among contemporary poets solely as a writer devoted to Oriental subjects. And it was in order to show this that in 1888 he published "Selected Poems, National and Non-Oriental."

The second son of a Sussex Justice of the Peace, Edwin Arnold was born on the 10th of June, 1832, and was educated in the first instance at King's School, Rochester, and afterwards at King's College, London, where he was elected to a scholarship at University College, Oxford. In 1853 he obtained the Newdigate Prize for "The Feast of Belshazzar" a poem in heroic couplets. All that need be remarked about this poem is that it did not rise above the familiar level of Newdigate Prize poems. In the same year he was selected to address the late Earl of Derby on his installation as Chancellor of the University, and in 1854 he graduated in honours. After leaving College he was elected second master in the English Division of King Edward the Sixth's School, at Birmingham, and was afterwards appointed Principal of the Government Sanscrit College at Poona, in the Bombay Presidency, and Fellow of the University of Bombay:—offices which he retained during the Indian Mutiny, returning to England in 1861.

During this time his pen was always busy both with verse and prose. Neither his volume "Griselda and other Poems" (1856), nor the previous one, "Poems Narrative and Lyrical" (1853), attracted so much attention as it deserved. The latter of these

two volumes contained, besides the chief poem, lyrics of a charming kind. One of these lyrics, "À Ma Future" (p. 553), mingles playfulness with poetic beauty in so perfect a way, that it is a pity Sir Edwin did not work this peculiar and delightful vein more thoroughly. The verses just named had many admirers. Among them was the accomplished Francis Mahoney, better known by his pseudonym of "Father Prout." His admiration was announced to the world in a very singular manner. The story may be told here as it is an interesting curiosity of literature. Nineteen years after the appearance of "À Ma Future" in the "Griselda" volume Mr. Blanchard Jerrold brought out a book called "Final Reliques of Father Prout." The frontispiece of this volume consisted of "À Ma Future" in a facsimile of the MS. of "Father Prout." Immediately a letter appeared in the *Athenæum*—written by the leading critic of that journal—in which the poem was claimed as Edwin Arnold's. Although in this challenge the volume, and even the very page of the volume in which the poem had originally appeared, was indicated, "Father Prout's" friend the late Mr. John Sheehan (who at one time was somewhat famous under the name of "The Irish Whiskey Drinker") declared that it was, nevertheless, by "Father Prout." One of the most humorous paper warfares ensued. It ended of course in the discovery that the poem had been copied by "Father Prout," not with any intention of appropriating it, but because he admired it, little thinking that his executor, finding it among his papers, would lay claim to it, and print it as a "relique" of himself.

In 1869 Sir Edwin Arnold published a volume of criticism entitled "The Poets of Greece," which though indebted in some considerable degree to Professor Alexis Prenon's "*Histoire de la Littérature Grecque*," is yet rich in ideas of his own. His remarks upon Homer and Hesiod are especially interesting. But his translations, although literally accurate, want the charm of the original. This is particularly so in his translation from Sappho. A fascinating prose volume, "*India Revisited*" (1886), describes, with graphic power and great beauty, the land whose literature has so deeply influenced him. "*Lotus and Jewel*" (1887) contained an Indian story, entitled "*A Rajpût Nurse*" (p. 547), told with such irresistible pathos, that it must be placed at the head of all Sir Edwin Arnold's shorter poems, whether original or translated. In the same year was issued a small prose volume entitled "*Death—and Afterwards*," comprising an essay reprinted from the *Fortnightly Review* "with supplementary comments." For beauty of thought and charm of diction this work must be placed high among Arnold's prose writings.

As a poet he has many deficiencies on the technical side. His ear for rhyme is sometimes imperfect. Sometimes he is content to take an assonance for a rhyme as in the following instance which occurs in his volume of "*Selected Poems, National and Non-Oriental*":—

"A Suabian man *began* it,
And a Pomeranian *sang* it,
In Alsace on the Rhine."

All the longer poems that have followed "*The Light of Asia*" have shown more and more diffuse-

ness and more and more of that looseness of execution into which he is exceedingly liable to fall.

Among his other volumes are "Indian Poetry" (1881), "The Song Celestial" (1885), and "With Sa 'di in the Garden, or the Book of Love" (1888). "In My Lady's Praise," poems written in honour of his late wife, Lady Arnold, appeared in 1889. Some of the poems are very charming, but they are frequently too fanciful, and merely pretty for such an occasion. One wonders, for instance, how at such a moment, all the fond conceits of the opening poem were present to the poet's mind. In "The Light of the World" (1891) Sir Edwin Arnold essays the profoundly difficult task of telling anew the story of Christ. Though not without occasional beauty, the poem is far from being successful, and exhibits in a marked degree many of its author's most characteristic faults. Sir Edwin Arnold published in 1891 "Japonica" and "Seas and Lands," volumes of prose descriptive of recent travel, and in 1892 "Potiphar's Wife and Other Poems." He was created a Knight Commander of the Indian Empire in 1888.

MACKENZIE BELL.

THE LIGHT OF ASIA.

1879.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

"The Light of Asia" is the history of Prince Gautama of India, more generally called Siddārtha, the founder of Buddhism, told by an "imaginary Buddhist votary." One day the King his father leads him forth to see "the pleasaunce of the spring."

I.

THE MYSTERY OF EVIL.

(FROM BOOK I.)

YET not more
Knew he as yet of grief than that one bird's,
Which, being healed, went joyous to its kind.
But on another day the King said, "Come,
Sweet son ! and see the pleasaunce of the spring,
And how the fruitful earth is wooed to yield
Its riches to the reaper ; how my realm—
Which shall be thine when the pile flames for me—
Feeds all its mouths and keeps the King's chest filled.
Fair is the season with new leaves, bright blooms,
Green grass, and cries of plough-time." So they rode
Into a land of wells and gardens, where,
All up and down the rich red loam, the steers
Strained their strong shoulders in the creaking yoke
Dragging the ploughs ; the fat soil rose and rolled
In smooth long waves back from the plough ; who drove
Planted both feet upon the leaping share
To make the furrow deep ; among the palms
The tinkle of the rippling water rang,
And where it ran the glad earth 'broidered it
With balsams and the spears of lemon-grass.
Elsewhere were sowers who went forth to sow ;
And all the jungle laughed with nesting songs,

And all the thickets rustled with small life
Of lizard, bee, beetle, and creeping things
Pleased at the spring-time. In the mango-sprays
The sun-birds flashed ; alone at his green forge
Toiled the loud coppersmith ; bee-eaters hawked,
Chasing the purple butterflies ; beneath,
Striped squirrels raced, the mynas perked and picked,
The seven brown sisters chattered in the thorn,
The pied fish-tiger hung above the pool,
The egrets stalked among the buffaloes,
The kites sailed circles in the golden air ;
About the painted temple peacocks flew,
The blue doves cooed from every well, far off
The village drums beat for some marriage-feast ;
All things spoke peace and plenty, and the Prince
Saw and rejoiced. But, looking deep, he saw
The thorns which grow upon this rose of life :
How the swart peasant sweated for his wage,
Toiling for leave to live ; and how he urged
The great-eyed oxen through the flaming hours,
Goading their velvet flanks : then marked he, too,
How lizard fed on ant, and snake on him,
And kite on both ; and how the fish-hawk robbed
The fish-tiger of that which it had seized ;
The shrike chasing the bulbul, which did hunt
The jewelled butterflies ; till everywhere
Each slew a slayer and in turn was slain,
Life living upon death. So the fair show
Veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy
Of mutual murder, from the worm to man,
Who himself kills his fellow ; seeing which—
The hungry ploughman and his labouring kine,
Their dewlaps blistered with the bitter yoke,
The rage to live which makes all living strife—

The Prince Siddârtha sighed. "Is this," he said,
"That happy earth they brought me forth to see ?
How salt with sweat the peasant's bread ! how hard
The oxen's service ! in the brake how fierce
The war of weak and strong ! i' th' air with plots !
No refuge e'en in water. Go aside
A space, and let me muse on what ye show."

So saying the good Lord Buddha seated him
Under a jambu-tree, with ankles crossed—
As holy statues sit—and first began
To meditate this deep disease of life,
What its far source and whence its remedy.
So vast a pity filled him, such wide love
For living things, such passion to heal pain,
That by their stress his princely spirit passed
To ecstasy, and, purged from mortal taint
Of sense and self, the boy attained thereat
Dhyâna, first step of "the path."

There flew
High overhead that hour five holy ones,
Whose free wings faltered as they passed the tree.
"What power superior draws us from our flight ?"
They asked,—for spirits feel all force divine,
And know the sacred presence of the pure.
Then, looking downward, they beheld the Buddh
Crowned with a rose-hued aureole, intent
On thoughts to save ; while from the grove a voice
Cried, "Rishis ! this is He shall help the world,
Descend and worship." So the Bright Ones came
And sang a song of praise, folding their wings ;
Then journeyed on, taking good news to Gods.

But certain from the King seeking the Prince
Found him still musing, though the noon was past,

And the sun hastened to the western hills :
Yet, while all shadows moved, the jambu-trees
Stayed in one quarter, overspreading him,
Lest the sloped rays should strike that sacred head ;
And he who saw this sight heard a voice say,
Amid the blossoms of the rose-apple,
"Let be the King's son ! till the shadow goes
Forth from his heart my shadow will not shift."

The King, anxious to shield his son from all further knowledge of the misery and suffering in the world, obtains for him in marriage a lovely Princess named Yasôdhara, and builds for his use a spacious and beautiful palace secluded in lovely gardens. Here the Prince lives, watchful servitors being always present to prevent intrusion from without.

" If one drooped
In the lovely Court—her dark glance dim, her feet
Faint in the dance—the guiltless criminal
Passed forth an exile from that Paradise,
Lest he should see and suffer at her woe,
Bright-eyed intendants watched to execute
Sentence on such as spake of the harsh world
Without, where aches and plagues were, tears and fears,
And wail of mourners."

The following is the description of the most exquisite chamber in this gorgeous palace of pleasure.

II.

SIDDÂRTHA'S CHAMBER.

(FROM BOOK II.)

BUT, innermost,
Beyond the richness of those hundred halls,
A secret chamber lurked, where skill had spent
All lovely fantasies to lull the mind.
The entrance of it was a cloistered square—
Roofed by the sky, and in the midst a tank—

Of milky marble built, and laid with slabs
Of milk-white marble ; bordered round the tank
And on the steps, and all along the frieze
With tender inlaid work of agate-stones,
Cool as to tread in summer-time on snows
It was to loiter there ; the sunbeams dropped
Their gold, and, passing into porch and niche,
Softened to shadows, silvery, pale, and dim,
As if the very Day paused and grew Eve
In love and silence at that bower's gate ;
For there beyond the gate the chamber was,
Beautiful, sweet ; a wonder of the world !
Soft light from perfumed lamps through windows fell,
Of nakre and stained stars of lucent film,
On golden cloths outspread, and silken beds,
And heavy splendour of the purdah's fringe,
Lifted to take only the loveliest in.
Here, whether it was night or day none knew,
For always streamed that softened light, more bright
Than sunrise, but as tender as the eve's ;
And always breathed sweet airs, more joy-giving
Than morning's, but as cool as midnight's breath ;
And night and day lutes sighed, and night and day
Delicious foods were spread, and dewy fruits,
Sherbets new chilled with snows of Himalay,
And sweetmeats made of subtle daintiness,
With sweet tree-milk in its own ivory cup.
And night and day served there a chosen band
Of nautch girls, cup-bearers, and cymballers,
Delicate, dark-browed ministers of love,
Who fanned the sleeping eyes of the happy Prince,
And when he waked, led back his thoughts to bliss
With music whispering through the blooms, and charm
Of amorous songs and dreamy dances, linked

By chime of ankle-bells and wave of arms
And silver vina-strings ; while essences
Of musk and champak, and the blue haze spread
From burning spices, soothed his soul again
To drowse by sweet Yasôdhara ; and thus
Siddârtha lived forgetting.

INDIAN POETRY.

1881.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE RAJAH'S RIDE.

NOW is the Devil-horse come to Sindh !
Wah ! wah ! gooroo !—that is true !
His belly is stuffed with the fire and the wind,
But a fleetier steed had Runjeet Dehu !

It's forty koss from Lahore to the ford,
Forty and more to far Jummoo ;
Fast may go the Feringhee lord,
But never so fast as Runjeet Dehu !

Runjeet Dehu was King of the Hill,
Lord and eagle of every crest ;
Now the swords and the spears are still,
God will have it—and God knows best !

Rajah Runjeet sate in the sky,
Watching the loaded Kafilas in ;
Afghan, Kashmerce, passing by,
Paid him pushm to save their skin.

Once he caracoled into the plain,
Wah ! the sparkle of steel on steel !
And up the pass came singing again
With a lakh of silver borne at his heel.

Once he trusted the Mussulman's word,
Wah ! wah ! trust a liar to lie !
Down from his eyrie they tempted my Bird,
And clipped his wings that he could not fly.

Fettered him fast in far Lahore,
Fast by the gate at the Runchenee Pûl;
Sad was the soul of Chunda Kour,
Glad the merchants of rich Kurnool

Ten months Runjeet lay in Lahore—
Wah! a hero's heart is brass!
Ten months never did Chunda Kour
Braid her hair at the tiring-glass.

There came a steed from Toorkistan,
Wah! God made him to match the hawk!
Fast beside him the four grooms ran,
To keep abreast the Toorkman's walk.

Black as the bear on Iskardoo;
Savage at heart as a tiger chained;
Fleeter than hawk that ever flew,
Never a Muslim could ride him reined.

"Runjeet Dehu! come forth from thy hold"—
Wah! ten months had rusted his chain!
"Ride this Sheitan's liver cold"—
Runjeet twisted his hand in the mane.

Runjeet sprang to the Toorkman's back,
Wah! a king on a kingly throne!
Snort, black Sheitan! till nostrils crack,
Rajah Runjeet sits, a stone.

Three times round the Maidan he rode,
Touched its neck at Kashmeree wall,
Struck the spurs till they spirted blood,
Leapt the rampart before them all!

Breasted the waves of the blue Ravee,
Forty horsemen mounting behind,
Forty bridle-chains flung free,—
Wah! wah! better chase the wind!

Chunda Kour sate sad in Jummoos:—
Hark! what horse-hoof echoes without?
“Rise! and welcome Runjeet Dehu—
Wash the Toorkman’s nostrils out!

“Forty koss he has come, my life!
Forty koss back he must carry me;
Rajah Runjeet visits his wife,
He steals no steed like an Afreedee.

“They bade me teach them how to ride—
Wah! wah! now I have taught them well!”
Chunda Kour sank low at his side!
Rajah Runjeet rode the hill.

When he came back to far Lahore—
Long or ever the night began—
Spake he, “Take your horse once more,
He carries well—when he bears a man.”

Then they gave him a khillut and gold,
All for his honour and grace and truth;
Send him back to his mountain-hold—
Muslim manners have touch of ruth;

Send him back, with dances and drum—
Wah! my Rajah Runjeet Dehu!
To Chunda Kour and his Jummoos home—
Wah! wah! futtee!—wah, gooroo!

PEARLS OF FAITH.

1883.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

I.

EVIL DEEDS.

*YAKBUZU wa Yabsutu ! heaven and hell
He closeth and uncloseth—and doth well !*

In gold and silk and robes of pride
An evil-hearted monarch died ;
Pampered and arrogant his soul
Quitted the grave. His eyes did roll
Hither and thither, deeming some
In that new world should surely come
To lead his spirit to a seat
Of state, for kingly merit meet.
What saw he ? 'twas a hag so foul
There is no Afrit, Djin, or Ghoul
With countenance as vile, or mien
As fearful, and such terrors seen
In the fierce voice and hideous air,
Blood-dripping hands and matted hair.
“Allah have mercy !” cried the king,
“Whence and what art thou, hateful thing ?”
“Dost thou not know—who gav'st me birth ?”
Replied the form ; “thy sins on earth
In me embodied thus behold.
I am thy wicked work ! unfold
Thine arms and elasp me, for we two
In hell must live thy sentence through.”

Then with a bitter cry, 'tis writ,
The king's soul passed unto the pit.

*Al-Kâbiz ! so He bars the gate
Against the unregenerate.*

II.

MOSES AND THE ANGEL.

*PRAISE Him, Al-Mutâhâli ! Whose decree
Is wiser than the wit of man can see.*

'Tis written in the chapter "of the Cave,"
An angel of the Lord, a minister,
Had errands upon earth, and Moses said,
"Grant me to wend with thee, that I may learn
God's ways with men." The Angel, answering, said,
"Thou canst not bear with me : thou wilt not have
Knowledge to judge ; yet if thou followest me,
Question me not, whatever I shall do,
Until I tell thee."

Then they found a ship
On the sea-shore, wherefrom the Angel struck
Her boards and brake them. Moses said, "Wilt drown
The mariners ? this is a strange thing wrought ?"
"Did I not say thou could'st not bear with me ?"
The Angel answered—"Be thou silent now !"

Yet farther, and they met an Arab boy :
Upon his eyes with mouth invisible
The Angel breathed ; and all his warm blood froze,
And, with a moan, he sank to earth and died.
Then Moses said, "Slayest thou the innocent
Who did no wrong ? this is a hard thing seen !"
"Did I not tell thee," said the Minister,
Thou wouldst not bear with me ? question me not !"

Then came they to a village, where there stood
A lowly hut ; the garden fence thereof
Toppled to fall : the Angel thrust it down,
A ruin of grey stones, and lime, and tiles,
Crushing the lentils, melons, saffron, beans,

The little harvest of the cottage folk.

"What hire," asked Moses, "hadst thou for this deed,
Seeming so evil?"

Then the Angel said,
"This is the parting betwixt me and thee;
Yet will I first make manifest the things
Thou couldst not bear, nor knowing; that my Lord—
'Exalted above all reproach'—be praised.
The ship I broke serveth poor fisher-folk
Whose livelihood was lost, because there came
A king that way seizing all boats found whole;
Now have they peace. Touching the Arab boy:
In two moons he had slain his mother's son,
Being perverse; but now his brother lives,
Whose life unto his tribe was more, and he
Dieth blood-guiltless. For the garden wall:
Two goodly youths dwell there, offspring of one
That loved his Lord, and underneath the stones
The father hid a treasure, which is theirs.
This shall they find, building their ruin up,
And joy will come upon their house! But thou,
Journey no more with me, because I do
Nought of myself, but all by Allah's will."

Al-Mutâhâl! Maker of men,
Exalted art Thou past our ken.

LOTUS AND JEWEL.

1887.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

A RAJPÛT NURSE.

“WHOSE tomb have they builded, Vittoo! under
this tamarind tree,
With its door of the rose-veined marble, and white
dome stately to see,
Was he holy Brahman, or Yogi, or Chief of the Rajpûtline,
Whose urn rests here by the river, in the shade of the
beautiful shrine?”

“May it please you,” quoth Vittoo, salaaming, “Pro-
tector of all the poor !

It was not for holy Brahman, they carved that delicate
door ;

Nor for Yogi, nor Rajpût Rana, built they this gem of
our land ;

But to tell of a Rajpût woman, as long as the stones
should stand.

“Her name was Môti, the pearl-name ; ’twas far in
the ancient times ;

But her moon-like face and her teeth of pearl are sung
of still in our rhymes ;

And because she was young, and comely, and of good
repute, and had laid

A babe in the arms of her husband, the Palace-Nurse
she was made :

“For the sweet chief-queen of the Rana in Joudhpore
city had died,

Leaving a motherless infant, the heir of that race of pride ;
The heir of the peacock-banner, of the five-coloured
flag, of the throne

Which traces its record of glory from days when it ruled
alone ;

“ From times when, forth from the sunlight, the first
of our kings came down
And had the earth for his footstool, and wore the
stars for his crown,
As all good Rajpûts have told us ; so Môti was proud
and true,
With the Prince of the land on her bosom, and her
own brown baby too.

“ And the Rajpût women will have it (I know not
myself of these things)
As the two babes lay on her lap there, her lord’s
and the Joudhpore King’s ;
So loyal was the blood of her body, so fast the faith
of her heart,
It passed to her new-born infant, who took of her
trust its part.

“ He would not suck of the breast-milk till the Prince
had drunken his fill ;
He would not sleep to the cradle-song till the Prince
was lulled and still ;
And he lay at night with his small arms clasped
round the Rana’s child,
As if those hands like the rose-leaf could shelter
from treason wild.

“ For treason was wild in the country, and villainous
men had sought
The life of the heir of the gadi, to the Palace in
secret brought ;
With bribes to the base, and with knife-thrusts for
the faithful, they made their way
Through the line of the guards, and the gateways,
to the hall where the women lay.

“There Mōti the foster-mother, sate singing the
children to rest,
Her baby at play on her crossed knees, and the
King’s son held to her breast ;
And the dark slave-maidens round her beat low on
the cymbal’s skin
Keeping the time of her soft song—when—Saheb !
—there hurried in

“A breathless watcher, who whispered, with horror
in eyes and face :
‘Oh ! Mōti ! men come to murder my Lord the Prince
in this place !
They have bought the help of the gate-guards, or
slaughtered them unawares,
Hark ! that is the noise of their tulwars, the clatter
upon the stairs !’

“For one breath she caught her baby from her lap
to her heart, and let
The King’s child sink from her nipple, with lips still
clinging and wet,
Then tore from the Prince his head-cloth, and the
putta of pearls from his waist,
And bound the belt on her infant, and the cap on his
brows, in haste ;

“And laid her own dear offspring, her flesh and
blood, on the floor,
With the girdle of pearls around him, and the cap
that the King’s son wore ;
While close to her heart, which was breaking, she
folded the Rāja’s joy,
And—even as the murderers lifted the purdah—she
fled with his boy.

"But there (so they deemed) in his jewels, lay the
Chota Rana, the Heir ;

'The cow with two calves has escaped us,' cried one
'it is right and fair

She should save her own butcha ; no matter ! the
edge of the dagger ends

This spark of Lord Raghoba's sunlight ; stab thrice
and four times, O friends !'

And the Rajpût women will have it (I know not if
this can be so)

That Môti's son in the putta and golden cap cooed
low,

When the sharp blades met in his small heart, with
never one moan or wince,

But died with a babe's light laughter, because he died
for his Prince.

"Thereby did that Rajpût mother preserve the line
of our Kings."

"Oh ! Vittoo," I said, "but they gave her much gold
and beautiful things,

And garments, and land for her people, and a home
in the Palace ! May be

She had grown to love that Princeling even more
than the child on her knee."

"May it please the Presence !" quoth Vittoo, "it
seemeth not so ! they gave

The gold and the garment and jewels, as much as
the proudest would have ;

But the same night deep in her true heart she buried
a knife, and smiled,

Saying this : 'I have saved my Rana ! I must go to
suckle my child !' "

SELECTED POEMS.

EDWIN ARNOLD,

1888.

I.—“HE AND SHE.”

SHE “is dead!” they said to him. “Come away;
Kiss her! and leave her! thy love is clay!”

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of marble they laid it fair:

Over her eyes which gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows, and her dear, pale face,
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes;—
Which were the whiter no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
“Come away,” they said;—“God understands!”

And then there was Silence;—and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
For they said, “As a lady should lie, lies she!”

And they held their breath as they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he—who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,—

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turn’d it!—Alone again—he and she!

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kiss’d, in the old place, the quiet cheek;

He and she ; yet she would not smile,
Though he call'd her the name that was fondest
erewhile ;

He and she ; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love !

Then he said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath
Is there no voice—no language of death

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct,—intense ?

"See, now,—I listen with soul, not ear—
What was the secret of dying, Dear ?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all,
How the spirit could let life's flower fall ?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal ?

"Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep ?

"Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear ?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so what a wisdom love is ?

"Oh, perfect Dead ! oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear ;

"I listen—as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as glad heaven !—and you do not tell !

"There must be pleasures in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet !

"I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon *my* brow shed.

"I would say, though the Angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"You should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise ;

"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

* * * * *

Ah ! foolish world ! Oh ! most kind Dead !
Though he told me, who will believe it was said ?
Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the soft rich voice, in the dear old way :—

"The utmost wonder is this,—I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear ;

"I can speak, now you listen with soul alone ;
If your soul could see, it would all be shown

"What a strange delicious amazement is Death,
To be without body and breathe without breath.

"I should laugh for joy if you did not cry ;
Oh, listen ! Love lasts !—Love never will die !

"I am only your Angel who was your Bride ;
And I know, that though dead, I have never died."

II.—*À MA FUTURE.*

1853.

WHERE waitest thou,
Lady, I am to love ? thou comest not !
Thou knowest of my sad and lonely lot ;
I looked for thee ere now !

It is the May,
And each fair sister-soul hath found its brother,
Only we two seek fondly each the other,
And seeking, still delay.

Where art thou, sweet ?
I long for thee, as thirsty lips for streams !
Oh, gentle promised Angel of my dreams.
Why do we never meet ?

Thou art as I,—
Thy soul doth wait for mine, as mine for thee ;
We cannot live apart ; must meeting be
Never before we die ?

Dear soul, not so !
That time doth keep for us some happy years,
That God hath portioned us our smiles and tears,
Thou knowest, and I know.

Yes, we shall meet !
And therefore let our searching be the stronger,
Dark ways of life shall not divide us longer,
Nor doubt, nor danger, sweet !

Hence 'tis I bear
This winter-tide as bravely as I may,
Patiently waiting for the bright spring-day,
That cometh with thee, dear.

'Tis the May-light
That crimsones all the quiet college gloom ;
May it shine softly in thy sleeping-room :
And so, dear wife, good night !

Richard Watson Dixon.

1833.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON, the son of Dr. James Dixon, an eminent Wesleyan minister, and grandson of Richard Watson, a well-known Wesleyan theological writer, was born May 5th, 1833. He was educated at King Edward's School, Birmingham, where he was contemporary with Burne Jones and Edwin Hatch, all three being prizemen at the tercentenary celebration of the school in 1851. Proceeding to Oxford he became associated with Burne Jones, William Morris, and others, in starting the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, which advocated pre-Raphaelite principles, and in which several of Rossetti's finest poems first appeared, as did also some of those of William Morris. At Oxford Mr. Dixon gained the Arnold prize for history, and a prize for sacred poetry. In 1858 he took holy orders as curate to Dean Gregory at Lambeth, since which date he has become vicar of Warksworth and honorary canon of Carlisle.

Mr. Dixon's first volume was "Christ's Company, and Other Poems," published in 1861, and followed in 1863 by "Historical Odes"; neither of which attracted much attention. In 1883 he published "Mano," a poetical history in *terza rima*. This work, which records the adventures of a Norman knight of the tenth century, met with more favour. Mr.

Swinburne gave it high praise, referring to its "wonderful power and grace" and its "triumphant success" as a metrical experiment. "Odes and Eclogues" followed in 1884, "Lyrical Poems" in 1886, "The Story of Eudocia and her Brothers" in 1888. In prose Mr. Dixon's chief work is his "History of the Church of England from the time of the Abolition of the Roman Jurisdiction," which has been appearing volume by volume during the last fifteen years, and which may be regarded as a standard authority.

Canon Dixon's poetry has a charm of its own which, if not calculated to win wide popularity, is, at least, strong enough to make those who value it wish that he could have paid more undivided attention to the muse. "Mano" is a real success, whether judged as a metrical experiment or as a characteristic romance of the period it represents. There is an old-time atmosphere about it, an archaic flavour, a quaint naturalness, a strange simplicity, which is a fitting setting for the story told, and which exercises a quiet fascination for the reader. The adventures, episodes, and dreams of the history are just such as would naturally arise out of its progress, and succeed each other in easy order, giving variety and interest to the narrative. Many of these form graphic pictures of the times they chronicle, such as might be found—and perhaps in some cases were found—in old records of monkish hands. Canto XVII., Book I., in which "Gerbert tells something of Mano's beginnings," and which is reprinted in the following pages, is, perhaps, as representative a canto as could be selected. The following lines from the opening of Canto VIII.,

Book I, "Of the Crosses of Love," may illustrate the quaint moralisings which occasionally, but never obtrusively, nor for too long a time, interrupt the progress of the narrative :—

"Thou poppy, that of Lethe art the flower,
Why hangest thou down ere ripeness be begun,
Ere yet be come thy seasonable hour,
That thou art lifted upward to the sun,
And bloomest high on thy erected stem,
Gazing the sky which late thou seemed to shun ?
Thou wearest still thy scarlet anadem
While life remains : then downward fallest again,
More lifeless than when first thou wast a gem :
And, ruined more and more by wintry rain,
Art gathered to thy root beneath the ground.—
So with man's heart, that shall of love be fain.
It waits in rest ere yet it may be crowned
With love's sledge flower : then in maturity
With waving splendours fires the air around :
Then enters on the day of misery,
The fickleness of time, the strokes of fate :
Love's stricken banners hover miserably,
Life's rotting root in sadness lingers late,
Ere frozen age seal the sad residue,
And pottering death e'en that obliterate."

Canon Dixon's poetry is all, more or less, informed with the old-time spirit, and invested with the atmosphere of long ago. In this it is easy to trace the predilections of the poet from the first. At Oxford he distinguished himself in history and poetry, and since then he has divided his leisure between the two. But whether occupied with the one or the other, it is clear that he loves to linger among the moss-grown ruins of the past, to wander in the gardens of old romance, and breathe the air which teems with the traditions of ancient story. The result is such as needs no commendation to

the sympathetic. The following lyric, with which we may close this brief notice, is full of bold and striking figures, all of which, however, contribute to the completeness of the picture as a whole :—

THE STORM DEMON.

“ The rock was black, the cloud was white :
The black rock in a gorge was set.
Earth rose, heaven stooped : upon that high
The thunder with the torrent met.

“ The vast half-weeping cloud came down,
Storm-laden : and a demon form,
Of gathered wrath, stood with a frown
Upon that pedestal of storm.

“ He stood, his rolling mantle spread,
His hat of darkness deeply set :
His locks heaved cloudlike round his head ;
The torrent lashed his feet of jet.

“ Forth from his eyes the lightning leapt,
His voice spake with the thunder's tone :
Earth's waters in swift flashes swept,
Her caverns answered with a groan.”

ALFRED H. MILES.

MANO.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON.

GERBERT TELLS SOMETHING OF MANO'S BEGINNINGS.

(BOOK I., CANTO XVII.)

THOU only bird that singest as thou flyest,
Heaven-mounting lark, that measurest with thy wing
The airy zones, till thou art lost in highest !

Upon the branch the laughing thrushes cling,
About her home the humble linnet wheels,
Around the tower the gathered starlings swing ;
These mix their songs and weave their figured reels :
Thou risest in thy lonely joy away,

From the first rapturous note that from thee steals,
Quick, quick and quicker, till the exalted lay
Is steadied in the golden breadths of light,
'Mid mildest clouds that bid thy pinions stay.

The heavens that give would yet sustain thy flight,
And o'er the earth for ever cast thy voice,
If but to gain were still to keep the height.

But soon thou sinkest on the fluttering poise
Of the same wings that soared : soon ceapest thou
The song that grew invisible with joys.

Love bids thy fall begin ; and thou art now
Dropped back to earth, and of the earth again,
Because that love hath made thy heart to bow.

Thou hast thy mate, thy nest on lowly plain,
Thy timid heart by law ineffable
Is drawn from the high heavens where thou shouldest reign.

Earth summons thee by her most tender spell ;
For thee there is a silence and a song :

Thy silence in the shadowy earth must dwell,
Thy song in the bright heavens cannot be long
—And best to thee those Fates may I compare

Where weakness strives to answer bidding strong.

Lord Gerbert thought in Mano to prepare
An instrument for service high and great,
And for that end to unfold the truth did spare.

Joanna's secret would he not repeat
In Mano's ear : the which great pity proved :
And therewithal he practised some deceit,

Hoping, ere Mano knew that he was loved,
That in them both unnourished love would die—
All which fell otherwise than it behoved.

Sir Mano being passed forth, the next was I,
The writer of these things that here are told,
Who unto Gerbert entered and stood nigh.

* * * * *

With him was set the archbishop of the town,
Of whom I spake above : whose life of sin
On his high order brought reproaches down.

And their discourse, whereas I entered in,
Was turned on Mano ;

* * * * *

Mark thou the tale.

A knight named Mannus, of the Lombards, who
Against the Saracen oft rode in mail,

One day, being weary with long travel, drew
Nigh to a gentle river, where was seen
A cottage small, and a low raft thereto.

There close beside the bank of grassy green
Lived a brave miller, who his babes maintained
By plying in the barge those banks between :

His course he took wherever might be gained
Grist for his wheel, or would return the same.
And by his cottage this bold knight upreined ;

The little children there were at their game :
To whom he called with cheery voice and kind,

Bidding them hold his war-horse mild and tame,

Whilst in the cot he might refreshment find.

Yet of them was there none that undertook

The mighty beast in their weak hold to bind :

Till one from out the timid crowd forth-broke,

A little boy, and on the bridle laid

His dauntless hand that with no terror shook ;

And drew the great horse forward, nought dismayed

When his full breathing in his face he felt,

And saw his trampling feet : the knight then said,

Well pleased, to the miller, that 'twere but ill dealt

That child so noble should no better be

Than they who in that humble dwelling dwelt.

" Sir," said the miller, " he comes not of me

Albeit he among my children fare :

For 'tis seven years since I my barge set free,

And, floating homeward, found this tender care

Laid underneath the sacks that hold the corn ;

But never knew what hand had left him there.

Not very long the infant had been born,

And him I reared for pity and for ruth."

Then, said the knight, " Upon that babe forlorn

As thou hadst pity, this I say in sooth,

Thy pity shall repent thee not ; for I,

As best I can, will recompense thy truth."

Then offered he much gold the child to buy

Whereto the miller presently agreed,

And bade his wife equip him thence to hie ;

Who brought him forth anon, and bade God speed,

Making some tears to come : and lastly when

The boy was lifted on the mighty steed,

" From evil women keep him," said she then ;

And as with gathered bridle forth they rode,

The miller said, " Keep him from evil men."

—“Then with that worthy knight the child abode,
For fifteen years bearing his foster name,
When the knight died : then forth he took his road
To Count Thuoldus, to whose camp he came
With many, whom the Italian venture brought
From other parts, and love of martial fame.

He is a knight of courage high and haught,
But mild and courteous, just and temperate :
Right worthy are the deeds that he has wrought.”

—“But yet his birth, his rank and race relate,”
The other coldly answered : and return
Received from Gerbert, “For that knowledge wait,
Because the tale may nearly thee concern
When I shall tell it : but another thing
Concerning Mano thou this day shalt learn :

That to St. Benedict an offering
Him from a child the good knight Mannus gave.
Wrapping within the altar’s covering

His little hand : to keep which contract grave
’Tis mine to draw him from the worldly throng
By fatherly persuasion, and to save.”

This said, his eyes on the archbishop long
He bent with firmness and austerity,
The while to me his words he did prolong :

And this the sum—that I should instantly
For Mano seek, and bid him be of heart
From Gerbert, and not muse on fantasy :

And that to Gerbert’s ear I should impart
Whate’er he did, still urging his return
Across the Alps by friendship’s winning art.

—This lesson then from Gerbert did I learn :
And further, that with Mano I should go
To Italy, and still with him sojourn :
Right glad was I that it was ordered so.

LYRICAL POEMS.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON.

I.—ODE: THE SPIRIT WOODED.

ART thou gone so far,
Beyond the poplar tops, beyond the sunset-bar,
Beyond the purple cloud that swells on high
In the tender fields of sky?

Leanest thou thy head
On sunset's golden breadth? Is thy wide hair spread
To his solemn kisses? Yet grow thou not pale
As he pales and dies: nor more my eyes avail
To search his cloud-drawn bed.

O come thou again!
Be seen on the falling slope: let thy footsteps pass
Where the river cuts with his blue scythe the grass:
Be heard in the voice that across the river comes
From the distant wood, even when the stilly rain
Is made to cease by light winds: come again,
As out of yon grey glooms,
When the cloud glows luminous and shiftily riven,
Forth comes the moon, the sweet surprise of heaven:
And her footfall light
Drops on the multiplied wave: her face is seen
In evening's pallor green:
And she waxes bright
With the death of the tinted air: yea, brighter grows
In sunset's gradual close.
To earth from heaven comes she,
So come thou to me.

Oh, lay thou thy head
On sunset's breadth of gold, thy hair bespread

In his solemn kisses : but grow thou not pale
As he pales and dies, lest eye no more avail
To search thy cloud-drawn bed.
Can the weeping eye
Always feel light through mists that never dry ?
Can empty arms alone for ever fill
Enough the best ? Can echo answer still,
When she has ceased to cry ?

II.—CHANGEFUL NATURE.

BLUE in the mists all day
The hills slept far away.
Skiddaw, Blencathra, all :
But now that eve 'gins fall,
They all seem drawing near
In giant shapes of fear :
While o'er the winding walks
The mighty darkness stalks,
Quenching the rich gorse-gold
On purple-deepened wold,
The columned pines their plumes
More blackly wave : then comes
The night, the rifling wind.

Oh Nature, art thou kind
From fair to fair to range
In never ceasing change
Beyond our power to feel ?
For still dost thou unseal
Thy glories numberless,
In changeful recklessness,
But givest us no power
To take the varied hour.

O'erweighed by all, we lose
Thy glories, or confuse.
E'en now this changeful sight
Of slow-advancing night,
The sleeping fields, the sweep
Of redness on the steep,
And o'er the hills and meads
The darkness which succeeds,
E'en now this change is lost,
Or by dull urgents crossed.

So, on the smooth sea-sand
Spread by the ebb's last hand,
And warmed by sunset's fire,
Walking to me desire
Has come to bear away
Each precious grain that lay,
Ere the cold wave again
Should mix and drown the plain :
So have I felt desire
Insatiably expire.

To mock us thus with change,
From fair to fair to range,
Dissolving thy most fair
Into a change as rare,
Leaving our hearts behind,
Oh, Nature, art thou kind ?
Thou walkest by our side,
Looking with eyes full wide
With laughter at our woe,
Because we would keep so
What is most fair to us.—
That bud how tremulous,
Which hangeth on the bough !

Ah, wouldst thou but allow
That it should hang there still !
Not so ; with wanton will
Thou clapest to thy hands,
And the burst bud expands
Into a flower as sweet
With laughter thou dost greet
The human sigh and groan
That mourns the thing that's gone.
Thou laughest, for thy store
Holds beauty evermore :
Nor loss to thee the pain
Or our heart-dizzied brain.
Then thyself dost tire
Of the unfilled desire
With which we thee pursue :
Therefore, with sudden view
Thou shewest us a glass
To see ourselves—Alas,
Grey we are grown, and old :
Our fancied heat is cold,
Our shaking limbs are dry :
We see ourselves, and die.

III.—WINTER WILL FOLLOW.

THE heaving roses of the hedge are stirred
By the sweet breath of summer, and the bird
Makes from within his jocund voice be heard.

The winds that kiss the roses sweep the sea
Of uncut grass, whose billows rolling free
Half drown the hedges which part lea from lea.

But soon shall look the wondering roses down
Upon an empty field cut close and brown,
That lifts no more its hight against their own.

And in a little while those roses bright,
 Leaf after leaf, shall flutter from their hight,
 And on the reaped field lie pink and white.
 And yet again the bird that sings so high
 Shall ask the snow for alms with piteous cry,
 Take fright in his bewildering bower, and die.

IV.—THE FALL OF THE LEAF.

RISE in their place the woods : the trees have cast,
 Like earth to earth, their children : now they stand
 Above the graves where lie their very last :
 Each pointing with her empty hand,
 And mourning o'er the russet floor,
 Naked and dispossessed :
 The qucenly sycamore,
 The linden, and the aspen, and the rest.

But thou, fair birch, doubtful to laugh or weep,
 Who timorously dost keep
 From the sad fallen ring thy face away ;
 Wouldst thou look to the heavens which wander grey,
 The unstilled clouds, slow mounting on their way ?
 They not regard thee, neither do they send
 One breath to wake thy sighs, nor gently tend
 Thy sorrow or thy smile to passion's end.

Lo, there on high the unlighted moon is hung,
 A cloud among the clouds : she giveth pledge,
 Which none from hope debars,
 Of hours that shall the naked boughs refledge
 In seasons high : her drifted train among,
 Musing, she leads the silent song,
 Grave mistress of white clouds, as lucid queen of stars.

APOLLO PYTHIUS.

RICHARD WATSON DIXON.

DESCRIPTION OF PYTHON.

THE limbless one, the swimmer of dry ground,
His mighty track amidst the forest wound :
And, with advancing head dividing still
The bowing trees, moved over vale and hill.

When the strong mowers wade through deepest meads,
When the sharp keel beneath the pressed sail speeds,
Seythes leave their swathe, and ships their watery wake :
But shattered oaks confessed the earth-born snake.
Amid his path of ruin he full oft
Raised his imperious crest, and bore aloft
High o'er the topmost shoots his baleful eyes,
Searching the wood-walks and tree-galleries.

In the deep groves all things that make their haunt,
And prey on others, through the stress of gaunt
Necessity, armed with their single skill
One creature of the rest to choose and kill,
Owned the more monstrous scourge, which bore the power
Nought to discriminate, but all devour.
They ministered their tremblings to his might
In fascination : yea, as in delight
The stealthy wild cat and the pard would run
Frankly before the watchful head : nor shun
Their destined death, more than the innocents,
The fatted mouse, the hare in withered bents.

Then trembled Nature in her various kinds
New sprung to life from the ooze that parching winds
Turned to dry land again, what time the flood,
Deucalion's deluge, was from earth subdued.

Adam Lindsay Gordon.

1833—1870.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON (who sometimes signed himself Lionel Gordon) was the only son of Captain Adam Gordon, a distinguished Indian officer, from whom the poet inherited his courage and independence. He was born in 1833, at Fayall, in the Azores (where his father was recruiting his health), and was educated at Cheltenham College—Captain Gordon being teacher of Hindustanee at the same school—Woolwich, and Merton College, Oxford. He was a wild, reckless, albeit honourable, and good-natured youth, getting himself in and out of frequent and numerous “scrapes,” his indulgent father always coming to his aid after raising a terrific storm and threatening all manner of pains and penalties. A rather compromising escapade, however, in connection with the Worcester races, prompted Captain Gordon to seriously consider the advisableness of shipping his son off to India, although, it may be remarked, the Captain sympathised with his son, and had he known of the affair in time, would have prevented its unfortunate culmination. Then came the climax. Lindsay had the indiscretion to fall in love with a farmer’s daughter. It mattered not that the farmer was well-to-do, and of an old county family, the “Honourable Captain,” as Lindsay termed his father, would not hear of such a *mésalliance*, and used

some strong language at an interview with his son, and challenged him with his matrimonial intentions. "Never you fear, governor," replied Lindsay, in a very loud, angry tone, "you may make your mind at rest on that score, for a good reason why, even supposing I wanted her, she wouldn't have me, though I am the Honourable Captain Gordon's son. So write and thank her for it. You ought to be very much obliged to her, if I am not!" Lindsay subsequently told the lady, who, in justice to her it should be noted, did not encourage her ardent lover in any way, that this was the cause of his being sent away from home. To this simple episode then may Australians attribute their good fortune in securing so famous a laureate. Captain Gordon could not secure the Indian appointment, but was successful in obtaining a position in the mounted police of South Australia for his son, who left England in the ship *Julia*, on the 7th of August, 1853, full of spirits and the hope of a speedy return. He carried letters of introduction to the Governor of South Australia, General Campbell, and well-known citizens of Adelaide. After a varied experience as a mounted trooper and horsebreaker, he married a Miss Park, in 1862. The next few years of his life were, perhaps, the happiest. About this time he received a small legacy which he inherited from his father, and it gave him a position in his district, the electors of which returned him to Parliament in place of the Attorney-General, and caused thereby the resignation of the Ministry. Law-making, however, was not to his taste, and he soon ceased to attend. Then followed years of misfortune and trouble, against which he struggled in vain, till at last he decided to

leave South Australia and seek his fortunes in the more prosperous colony of Victoria. He arrived at Ballarat about the year 1867, and subsequently settled in Melbourne, where his work was first published in book form, the first volume being "Sea Spray and Smoke Drift." This volume contained a variety of characteristic works, in which the influence of Browning and Swinburne are however both seen. It is impossible not to recognise the indomitable spirit of the former in a stanza like the following from "Finis Exoptatus" in "Ye Weary Wayfarer":—

Question not, but live and labour
Till yon goal be won,
Helping every feeble neighbour,
Seeking help from none ;
Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone,
KINDNESS in another's trouble
COURAGE in your own.

while the flow and swing of Swinburne's versification finds echo in Gordon's more florid measures.

In a poem in this volume entitled "Whisperings in Wattle-Boughs" there is a touching allusion to those he left behind in the old country:—

Oh, tell me, father mine, ere the good ship cross'd the brine,
On the gangway one mute hand-grip we exchange'd,
Do you, past the grave employ, for your stubborn reckless boy,
Those petitions that in life were ne'er estranged.

Oh, tell me, sister dear, parting word and parting tear
Never passed between us ; let me bear the blame.
Are you living girl or dead ? bitter tears since then I've shed
For the lips that lisp'd with mine a mother's name.

* * * * *

Oh, whisper, buried love, is there rest and peace above?—

There is little hope and comfort here below ;

On your sweet facelies the mould, and your bed is straight
and cold—

Near the harbour where the sea-tides ebb and flow.

Confiteor (p. 578) is from this volume. Gordon's love of horses and hunting still kept him associated with the turf, and he soon became famous as a "gentleman jockey." He also tried journalistic work for the sporting weeklies, and published another volume—the dramatic lyric, "Ashtaroath." He made no material headway, and his circumstances daily became more straitened. He hoped to put everything right by means of the income of an estate and barony to which he believed himself entitled, and in this belief he arranged for the publication of another volume of verse—"Bush Ballads and Galloping Rhymes," a book full of characteristic work, from which we extract "The Sick Stockrider" and "How we beat the Favourite."

But the entail of the estate proved invalid. The sad news was too much for a constitution shattered by heavy falls in the hunting-field and seriously affected by sunstroke. Despair of being able to meet his liabilities, the terrible shock of the disappointment, and the inability to obtain settled employment became too great a strain for his overwrought nerves, and on the morning following the publication of his new volume—the 24th August, 1870—he was found dead in the scrub, with a bullet wound in his head—he had slain himself in the bitterness of an agony for which he had vainly striven to find surcease in life. Years before he had written, in a poem which unfortunately finds no place in his collected works, the pathetic stanza:—

“ But the dead—they are tranquil, or seem so,
Nor laugh they, nor weep—
And I who rest not, though I dream so,
Ask only their sleep.
I have sown tears and brambles on fickle,
False sands, and already my sickle
Has reap'd the rank weed and the prickle—
What more shall I reap ? ”

Some critics have held that Gordon is not an Australian poet in the true sense, contending that not only was he not native born, but that his inspiration was not drawn from Australia, and that during his whole life he was out of tune with the genius of Australia. This, to my mind, is a mistaken view. It was essentially the climatic and social conditions of Australian life that fanned the spark of genius into a flame. In his pre-colonial days he wrote fugitive rhymes which were more remarkable for their vigour of diction than for aught else, and he attached but little value to them. In his letters to his most intimate friend he made no allusion to his coquetry with the muse, he did not even seem to know of the power which he possessed, and which he so quickly developed under the genial skies of Australia. Physical excellence seemed to be his only aim, and it must be admitted that as a runner, wrestler, rider, and boxer, he established a reputation in the county in which he resided. But his health was undermined, and he was not sorry to leave England for a time in order to recuperate it. This was soon accomplished after a brief residence in Australia.

In a letter of Gordon's, which I have in my possession, dated from Penola, and sent to an intimate friend, he writes: “Thank God, a few months of total abstinence, and a sober, active life have restored

health, strength, spirits, and pluck to a wonderful extent, and I am now as good a man as ever I was, and with hopes of being a still better one ; and I mean to show some of the cocktails yet what stuff I am made of."

As an illustration of his Australianism, take that vivid picture of bush life, "The Sick Stockrider," or that beautiful dedication to Whyte Melville. Who that knows Australia will not acknowledge the realistic beauty of the following lines?—

" In the deep'ning of dawn when it dapples
 The dark of the sky,
 With streaks like the redd'ning of apples,
 The ripening of rye.
 To eastward where cluster by cluster
 Dim stars and dull planets, that muster,
 Wax wan in a world of white lustre
 That spreads fair and high.

* * * * *

In the land where the wattle gold trembles
 'Twixt shadow and shine,
 Where each dew-laden air draught resembles
 A long draught of wine ;
 Where the skyline's blue burnished resistance
 Makes deeper the dreamiest distance,
 Some songs in all hearts have existence—
 Such songs have been mine."

At any rate no poet has a stronger hold upon the Australian of to-day, and this appreciation seems to rest upon so firm and natural a basis that it is difficult to believe that the Australian of the future can fail to find interest in his work.

J. HOWLETT-ROSS.

POEMS.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

I.—THE SICK STOCKRIDER.

HOLD hard, Ned! Lift me down once more, and lay
me in the shade.

Old man, you've had your work cut out to guide
Both horses, and to hold me in the saddle when I swayed,
All through the hot, slow, sleepy, silent ride.
The dawn at "Moorabinda" was a mist rack dull and dense,
The sun-rise was a sullen, sluggish lamp;
I was dozing in the gateway at Arbuthnot's bound'ry fence,
I was dreaming on the Limestone cattle camp.
We crossed the creek at Carricksford, and sharply through
the haze,
And suddenly the sun shot flaming forth;
To southward lay "Katâwa," with the sand peaks all
ablaze,
And the flushed fields of Glen Lomond lay to north.
Now westward winds the bridle-path that leads to Lindis-
farm,
And yonder looms the double-headed Bluff
From the far side of the first hill, when the skies are
clear and calm,
You can see Sylvester's woolshed fair enough.
Five miles we used to call it from our homestead to the place
Where the big tree spans the roadway like an arch;
'Twas here we ran the dingo down that gave us such a chase
Eight years ago—or was it nine?—last March.

'Twas merry in the glowing morn among the gleaming grass,
To wander as we've wandered many a mile,
And blow the cool tobacco cloud, and watch the white
wreaths pass,

Sitting loosely in the saddle all the while.
'Twas merry 'mid the blackwoods, when we spied the
station roofs
To wheel the wild scrub cattle at the yard,
With a running fire of stock whips and a fiery run of hoofs;
Oh! the hardest day was never then too hard!

Aye! we had a glorious gallop after "Starlight" and his
gang,
When they bolted from Sylvester's on the flat;
How the sun-dried reed-beds crackled, how the flint-
strewn ranges rang,
To the strokes of "Mountaineer" and "Acrobat."
Hard behind them in the timber, harder still across the heath,
Close beside them through the tea-tree scrub we dash'd;
And the golden-tinted fern leaves, how they rustled
underneath:
And the honeysuckle osiers, how they crash'd.
We led the hunt throughout, Ned, on the chestnut and the
grey,
And the troopers were three hundred yards behind,
While we emptied our six-shooters on the bush-rangers at
bay,
In the creek with stunted box-tree for a blind!
There you grappled with the leader, man to man, and
horse to horse,
And you roll'd together when the chestnut rear'd.
He blazed away and missed you in that shallow water-
course—
A narrow shave—his powder singed your beard!

In these hours when life is ebbing, how those days when
life was young
Come back to us; how clearly I recall

Even the yarns Jack Hall invented, and the songs Jem
Roper sung ;
And where are now Jem Roper and Jack Hall ? †

Aye ! nearly all our comrades of the old colonial school,
Our ancient boon companions, Ned, are gone ;
Hard livers for the most part, somewhat reckless as a rule,
It seems that you and I are left alone.

There was Hughes, who got in trouble through that
business with the cards,
It matters little what became of him ;
But a steer ripp'd up Macpherson in the Cooraminta yards
And Sullivan was drown'd at Sink-or-swim ;
And Mostyn—poor Frank Mostyn—died at last, a fearful
wreck,
In the “ horrors ” at the Upper Wandinong,
And Carisbrooke, the rider, at the Horsefall broke his neck.
Faith ! the wonder was he saved his neck so long !
Ah ! those days and nights we squandered at the
Logans' in the glen—
The Logans, man and wife, have long been dead.
Elsie's tallest girl seems taller than your little Elsie then ;
And Ethel is a woman grown and wed.

I've had my share of pastime, and I've done my share of toil,
And life is short—the longest life a span ;
I care not now to tarry for the corn or for the oil,
Or for the wine that maketh glad the heart of man.
For good undone, and gifts misspent, and resolutions vain,
'Tis somewhat late to trouble. This I know—
I should live the same life over, if I had to live again ;
And the chances are I go where most men go.

The deep blue skies wax dusky, and the tall green trees
grow dim,
The sward beneath me seems to heave and fall ;
And sickly, smoky shadows through the sleepy sunlight swim,
And on the very sun's face weave their pall.
Let me slumber in the hollow where the wattle blossoms wave,
With never stone or rail to fence my bed ;
Should the sturdy station children pull the bush-flowers on
my grave,
I may chance to hear them romping overhead.

II.—CONFITEOR.

THE shore boat lies in the morning light,
By the good ship ready for sailing ;
The skies are clear, and the dawn is bright,
Tho' the bar of the bay is fleck'd with white,
And the wind is fitfully wailing ;
Near the tiller stands the priest, and the knight
Leans over the quarter-railing.

"There is time while the vessel tarries still,
There is time while her shrouds are slack,
There is time ere her sails to the west wind fill,
Ere her tall masts vanish from town and from hill,
Ere cleaves to her keel the track :
There is time for confession to those who will
To those who may never come back."

"Sir priest, you can shrive these men of mine,
And, I pray you, shrive them fast,
And shrive those hardy sons of the brine,
Captain and mates of the *Eglantine*,
And sailors before the mast ;
Then pledge me a cup of the Cyprus wine,
For I fain would bury the past."

"And hast thou naught to repent, my son ?
Dost thou scorn confession and shrift ?
Ere thy sands from the glass of time shall run
Is there naught undone that thou should'st have done,
Naught done that thou should'st have left ?
The guiltiest soul may from guilt be won,
And the stoniest heart may be cleft."

"Have my ears been closed to the prayer of the poor
Or deaf to the cry of distress ?
Have I given little, and taken more ?
Have I brought a curse to the widow's door ?
Have I wronged the fatherless ?
Have I steep'd my fingers in guiltless gore,
That I must perforce confess ?"

"Have thy steps been guided by purity
Through the paths with wickedness rife ?
Hast thou never smitten thine enemy ?
Hast thou yielded naught to the lust of the eye,
And naught to the pride of life ?
Hast thou passed all snares of pleasure by ?
Hast thou shunn'd all wrath and strife ?"

"Nay, certes ! a sinful life I've led,
Yet I've suffered, and lived in hope ;
I may suffer still, but my hope has fled,—
I've nothing now to hope or to dread,
And with fate I can fairly cope ;
Were the waters closing over my head,
I should scarcely catch at a rope."

"Dost suffer ? thy pain may be fraught with grace,
Since never by works alone
We are saved ;—the penitent thief may trace

The wealth of love in the Saviour's face
To the Pharisee rarely shown ;
And the Magdalene's arms may yet embrace
The foot of the jasper throne."

" Sir priest, a heavier doom I dree,
For I feel no quickening pain,
But a dull, dumb weight, when I bow my knee,
And (not with the words of the Pharisee)
My hard eyes heavenward strain,
Where my dead darling prayeth for me
Now, I wot, she prayeth in vain !

" Still I hear it over the battle's din,
And over the festive cheer,—
So she pray'd with clasp'd hands, white and thin,—
The prayer of a soul absolved from sin,
For a soul that is dark and drear,
For the light of repentance bursting in,
And the flood of the blinding tear.

" Say, priest ! when the saint must vainly plead,
Oh ! how shall the sinner fare ?
I hold your comfort a broken reed ;
Let the wither'd branch for itself take heed,
While the green shoots wait your care ;
I've striven though feebly, to grasp your creed,
And I've grappled my own despair."

" By the little within thee, good and brave,
Not wholly shattered, though shaken ;
By the soul that crieth beyond the grave,
The love that He once in His mercy gave,
In His mercy since retaken,
I conjure thee, oh ! sinner, pardon crave !
I implore thee, oh ! sleeper, waken !"

“Go to! shall I lay my black soul bare
 To a vain self-righteous man?
 In my sin, in my sorrow, you may not share,
 And yet, could I meet with one who must bear
 The load of an equal ban,
 With him I might strive to blend one prayer,
 The wail of the Publican.”

“My son, I, too, am a withered bough,
 My place is to others given;
 Thou hast sinn’d thou sayest; I ask not how,
 For I too, have sinn’d, even as thou,
 And I, too, have feebly striven,
 And with thee I must bow, crying, ‘Shrive us now!
 Our Father which art in heaven!’”

III.—HOW WE BEAT THE FAVOURITE.

(A LAY OF THE LOAMSHIRE HUNT CÚP.)

“**A**YE, squire,” said Stevens, “they back him at evens!
 The race is all over, bar shouting, they say;
 The Clown ought to beat her; Dick Neville is sweeter
 Than ever—he swears he can win all the way.

“A gentleman rider—well, I’m an outsider,
 But if he’s a gent who the mischief’s a jock?
 You swells mostly blunder, Dick rides for the plunder,
 He rides, too, like thunder—he sits like a rock.

“He calls ‘hunted fairly’ a horse that has barely
 Been stripp’d for a trot within sight of the hounds,
 A horse that at Warwick beat Birdlime and Yorick,
 And gave Abdelkader at Aintree nine pounds.

“They say we have no test to warrant a protest;
 Dick rides for a lord and stands in with a steward;
 The light of their faces they show him—his case is
 Prejudged and his verdict already secured.

"But none can outlast her, and few travel faster,
She strides in her work clean away from The Drag
You hold her and sit her, she couldn't be fitter,
Whenever you hit her she'll spring like a stag.

"And p'rhaps the green jacket, at odds though they back it,
May fall, or there's no knowing what may turn up.
The mare is quite ready, sit still and ride steady,
Keep cool; and I think you may just win the Cup."

Dark-brown with tan muzzle, just stripped for the tussle,
Stood Iseult, arching her neck to the curb,
A lean head and fiery, strong quarters and wiry,
A loin rather light, but a shoulder superb.

Some parting injunction, bestowed with great unction,
I tried to recall, but forgot like a dunce,
When Reginald Murray, full tilt on White Surrey,
Came down in a hurry to start us at once.

"Keep back in the yellow! Come up on Othello!
Hold hard on the chestnut! Turn round on The Drag!
Keep back there on Spartan! Back you, sir, in tartan!
So, steady there, easy," and down went the flag.

We started, and Kerr made strong running on Mermaid,
Through furrows that led to the first stake-and-bound,
The crack, half extended, look'd bloodlike and splendid,
Held wide on the right where the headland was sound.

I pulled hard to baffle her rush with the snaffle,
Before her two-thirds of the field got away,
All through the wet pasture where floods of the last year
Still loitered, they clotted my crimson with clay.

The fourth fence, a wattle, floor'd Monk and Blue-bottle ;
The Drag came to grief at the blackthorn and ditch,
The rails toppled over Redoubt and Red Rover,
The lane stopped Lycurgus and Leicestershire Witch.

She passed like an arrow Kildare and Cock Sparrow,
And Mantrap and Mermaid refused the stone wall ;
And Giles on The Greyling came down at the paling,
And I was left sailing in front of them all.

I took them a burster, nor eased her nor nursed her
Until the Black Bullfinch led into the plough,
And through the strong bramble we bored with a scramble—
My cap was knock'd off by the hazel-tree bough.

Where furrows looked lighter I drew the rein tighter—
Her dark chest all dappled with flakes of white foam,
Her flanks mud bespattered, a weak rail she shattered—
We landed on turf with our heads turn'd for home.

Then crash'd a low binder, and then close behind her
The sward to the strokes of the favourite shook ;
His rush roused her mettle, yet ever so little
She shorten'd her stride as we raced at the brook.

She rose when I hit her. I saw the stream glitter,
A wide scarlet nostril flashed close to my knee,
Between sky and water The Clown came and caught her,
The space that he cleared was a caution to see.

And forcing the running, discarding all cunning,
A length to the front went the rider in green ;
A long strip of stubble, and then the big double,
Two stiff flights of rails with a quickset between.

She raced at the rasper, I felt my knees grasp her,
I found my hands give to her strain on the bit,
She rose when The Clown did—our silks as we bounded
Brush'd lightly, our stirrups clash'd loud as we lit.

A rise steeply sloping, a fence with stone coping --
The last—we diverged round the base of the hill ;
His path was the nearer, his leap was the clearer,
I flogg'd up the straight, and he led sitting still.

She came to his quarter, and on still I brought her,
And up to his girth, to his breast-plate she drew ;
A short prayer from Neville just reach'd me, "The devil,"
He mutter'd—lock'd level the hurdles we flew.

A hum of hoarse cheering, a dense crowd careering,
All sights seen obscurely, all shouts vaguely heard ;
"The green wins !" "The crimson !" The multitude swims on,
And figures are blended and features are blurr'd.

"The horse is her master !" "The green forges past her !"
"The Clown will outlast her !" "The Clown wins !" "The
Clown !"

The white railing races with all the white faces,
The chestnut outpaces, outstretches the brown.

On still past the gateway she strains in the straightway,
Still struggles, "The Clown by a short neck at most,"
He swerves, the green scourges, the stand rocks and surges,
And flashes, and verges, and flits the white post.

Aye ! so ends the tussle,—I knew the tan muzzle
Was first, though the ring-men were yelling "Dead heat !"
A nose I could swear by, but Clarke said "The mare by
A short head." And that's how the favourite was beat.

John Nichol.

1833.

JOHN NICHOL was born at Montrose, on September 8th, 1833. He was the son of the well-known astronomer, John Pringle Nichol. He studied at Glasgow University, and afterwards went up to Balliol College, Oxford, where he took his degree with first-class honours in classics and philosophy in 1859. He was appointed to the chair of English Literature in Glasgow University in 1861, and in 1873 he received the degree of LL.D. from the University of St. Andrews. He is the author of "Tables of English Literature," the volume on Byron in the series of "English Men of Letters," "Francis Bacon: his Life and Philosophy," "Robert Burns: Summary of his Career and Genius"; "Themistocles and Other Poems," and "American Literature: an Historical Sketch, 1620-1880." He has contributed to *The Westminster Review*, *Good Words*, and other periodicals. His chief work is his historical drama "Hannibal," which appeared in 1872. He resigned his chair in 1889.

To deal in dramatic form with the events of the Second Punic War, and above all to attempt the portrayal of the Carthaginian hero, was an effort of no common daring. Professor Nichol's work is not unworthy of his high theme. The action of the play covers the interval between the period of Hasdrubal's

sway in Spain and the battle of the Metaurus. The writer is inspired by the most ardent admiration for the incomparable general; his Hannibal is an impressive and sympathetic figure, whose words have often the true heroic ring. Two others, at least, of the characters are animated by the fire of imaginative creation—Hasdrubal and the Roman lady Fulvia, the heroine of the love-episode. The dialogue is terse and spirited; it rises now and then to a high level of eloquence, and is repeatedly lit by flashes of dramatic insight. There are several passages instinct with deep feeling and poetical beauty. Professor Nichol is likewise the author of various graceful lyrics, of which we may quote—

GOOD NIGHT, MY LOVE, GOOD NIGHT!

“Good night, my love, good night !
Farewell ! the breeze is sighing
Along the harbour height ;
The fleecy clouds are flying
Beneath Astarte’s light.
My mariners are crying
‘ In favouring winds away !
And I, my love descrying,
Must cleave the Ægean spray.
The song that the sea is singing
Is gentle and soft to-night ;
The lustre the stars are flinging
On the bay is tender and bright ;
The bark like a bird is springing
And speeding from the sight ;
And a tune in my head is ringing
That thrills my heart for flight
Across the waves, soon winging
Return to thee ; and bringing
Treasures for thy delight.
Good night, my love, good night !

WALTER WHYTE.

MARE MEDITERRANEUM

JOHN NICHOL.

A LINE of light ! it is the inland Sea,
The least in compass and the first in fame ;
The gleaming of its waves recalls to me
Full many an ancient name.

As through my dreamland floats the days of old,
The forms and features of their heroes shine ;
I see Phœnician sailors bearing gold
From the Tartessian mine.

Seeking new worlds, storm-tossed Ulysses ploughs
Remoter surges of the winding main ;
And Grecian captains come to pay their vows,
Or gather up the slain.

I see the temples of the Violet Crown
Burn upward in the home of glorious flight ;
And mariners of unclipsed renown,
Who won the great sea-fight.

I hear the dashing of a thousand oars,
The angry waters take a deeper dye ;
A thousand echoes vibrate from the shores
With Athens' battle-cry.

Again the Carthaginian rovers sweep
With sword and commerce on from shore to shore
In visionary storms the breakers leap
Round Syrtes as of yore.

Victory, sitting on the Seven Hills,
Had gained the world when she had mastered thee ;
Thy bosom with the Roman war-note thrills,
Wave of the inland sea.

Then, singing as they sail in shining ships,
I see the monarch minsters of Romance,
And hear their praises murmured through lips
Of the fair dames of France.

Across the deep another music swells,
On Adrian bays a later splendour smiles ;
Power hails the marble city where she dwells
Queen of a hundred isles.

Westward the galleys of the Crescent roam,
And meet the Pisan ; challenge on the breeze,
Till the long Dorian palace lords the foam
With stalwart Genoese.

But the light fades ; the vision wears away ;
I see the mist above the dreary wave.
Blow winds of freedom, and give another day
Of glory to the brave.

HANNIBAL.

1873.

JOHN NICHOL.

(ACT I., SCENE IV.)

HASDRUBAL'S TENT.

Hasdrubal lying on a couch ; near him Myra, Hannibal and Mago ; behind whom the Generals of the Army Maharbal, Acron, Zacantho, etc.

Hasdrubal. After those last embraces, I can die
Weep not for me ; I have had prosperous days.
A quiet life may have a quiet close ;
But they who fight for empires, like our race,
Must fall in harness. 'Mid the mists, I see
Warrior ghosts, that beckon me and point
To Hannibal, around his head a flame,
Your leader that shall be in mightier fields,
Planting your standards o'er the hills that bound
My work, not wholly vain. I am content
To have served Carthage. But his name will be
Her splendour and a terror to her foes,
Until the end. I cannot tell the end—
I see great fires and ruined citadels
And brave men falling round : Forgive me, friends,
For dying dreams are sickly. Keep you whole,
Pull well together, as our rowers pulled
Across the Syrtes, when I was a boy.
Myra ! dost thou remember how we met
When we sailed boats, and plashed about the bay.
I wonder do its ripples, now as then,
Shine in the sun and in Astarte's light.

No ripple ever came between our loves.
Follow me,—follow, if the hope be true,—
To horse, Maharbal ! Archers, draw your bows,
Shoot all your arrows sunward, whence we came ;
Though the clouds hide them, they may strike the
targe.

I'm with your armies still. Beware of Rome.
Trust in my Spaniards. Acron, tell the Gauls
We do them no dishonour for this flaw,
But fight their battles. So my silver mines,
Yielding a million monthly, have brought back
The islanders. At last on Syracuse
Our banner waves. Saguntum—breach her walls.
Pass the Iberus—Myra !—Hannibal !

Hannibal. He sleeps where treason cannot touch
his heart.

Lewis Morris.

1833.

MR. LEWIS MORRIS was born in 1833, at Carmarthen, and is a descendant of the Welsh poet of the same name who flourished during the early part of the last century. He was educated at the grammar school of his native town, whence he passed on to Cowbridge and Sherborne, and Jesus College, Oxford, where he obtained the Chancellor's prize (1855), and the English Essay prize (1858). Having taken his degree, he removed to London, and studied law. He was called to the Bar in 1861, and practised for some years.

In 1872, 1874, and 1875 were issued, respectively, the first, second, and third series of "Songs of Two Worlds." These volumes were soon followed by the three books of the "Epic of Hades," and later by "Gwen," the "Ode of Life," "Songs Unsung," "Gycia," and "Songs of Britain." These were all included in the collected "Works" issued in one volume in 1890 in which year "A Vision of Saints" also appeared.

That Mr. Lewis Morris has been one of the most widely read of modern poets is a fact evidenced by the many editions through which his several volumes have passed; and it seems to us that this popularity is in some respects due to his very limitations. He has not stood aloof from the world

with artistic self-sufficiency. His dreams are qualified by the actual, and are in part things of substance to rub shoulders against in the rush of life. His Greeks, instead of walking and conversing ever with the "white gods on the hill," busy themselves occasionally with the welfare of shock-headed lads who wish to forsake their labours behind the plough. Hence the larger human interest of his poems and their appeal to a wider circle of readers. That his heroes' autobiographies are sometimes too obviously tagged with the moral of a Sunday sermon of these days is true, but this is no impediment to wide popularity, and when all has been said, we are compelled to make the admission that few have done so much as Lewis Morris to make the literature of Greece a living reality for unlearned readers. His works are said to be "freighted with the weightiest convictions, and pointed with the most determined aim." As a consequence of this some deny them their true position in the poetry of the age; for if there is one quality more offensive than others to a certain school of letters it is earnestness. Gustave Flaubert declares that the artist should have no convictions. And is not the confession contained in the following lines from "The Food of Song," an unmistakable recognition of the value of their pet aversion?—

"How best doth vision come
To the poet's mind?

* * * * *

"Shall he attune his voice
To sweetest song,
When earth and sea and sky alike rejoice,
And men are blest, and think no thought of wrong,

In some ideal heaven, some happy isle,
Where life is stiffened to a changeless smile ?

* * * *

“Rather amid the throng
Of toiling men

He finds the food and sustenance of song
Spread by hidden hands, again, and yet again,
Where'er he goes by crowded city street,
He fares thro' springing fancies, sad and sweet.”

There is, perhaps, evident in Mr. Morris' poetry too great an aptitude for amplifying and enforcing mere truisms, and his enemies have made more than enough of his tendency in this direction. But however a critic may cry out against a poet turning preacher, the poet is not thereby deprived of his right to be heard, especially if he has singleness of purpose in his heart and music in his voice. At the same time we are bound to admit that unless a man does actually stand aside from the crowd, as Wordsworth and Emerson did, he will soon find that he lacks the leisure of heart and mind so necessary to the life of the poet.

In his “Songs of Two Worlds” Mr. Morris likens himself to a bird, pouring out “rapt, unconscious, all the sweetness of her psalm.” We hesitate to confirm this little bit of egotism, and would rather say that the song is too heavily weighted with the thought of the day to be termed either “rapt” or “unconscious.” But why need a poet strive so very much to be considered creative or inspired? If he be, it will manifest itself, of a certainty, in all he does; if not, let him go to Emerson and comfort himself with these words:—

“Great men are more distinguished by range and

extent, than by originality. . . . The greatest genius is the most indebted man. . . . He finds himself in the river of the thoughts and events, forced onward by the ideas and necessities of his contemporaries. . . . The poet needs a ground in popular tradition on which he may work, and which, again, may restrain his art within the due temperance. . . . Other men say wise things as well as he ; only they say a good many foolish things, and do not know when they have spoken wisely. He knows the sparkle of the true stone, and puts it in high place, wherever he finds it. . . . Thus all originality is relative."

Sharing the view of the writer of the old Welsh Triad who set forth the three excellences of poetry as simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of invention, Mr. Morris has done good work on behalf of plain, honest speech in literature both by his example and precept. His confession is :—

"I may not scorn, I cannot prize,
Those whose quick-coming fancies rise
Only in quaint disguise."

He finds no need of elaborate and tiresome details for the just presentation of some of his visions. Witness two of his word-pictures :—

"I knew a woman perfect as a young man's dream,"
and,

"The fairest woman that the poet's dream,
Or artist hand has fashioned."

The desire of the universal heart for more adequate means of expression finds characteristic treatment at the hand of Mr. Lewis Morris. However we

may attain to the freedom of loosened speech, he says,—

“ We are dumb, we are dumb, and may not tell
 What stirs within us, though the soul may throb
 And tremble with its passion ; though the heart
 Dissolve in weeping : dumb. Nature may spread
 Sublimest sights of beauty ; art inspire
 High thoughts and pure of God-like sacrifice ;
 Yet no word comes. Heroic, daring deeds
 Thrill us, yet no word comes ; we are dumb, we are dumb
 Save that from finer souls at times may rise,
 Once in an age, faint, inarticulate sounds,
 Low, halting tones of wonder, such as come
 From children looking on the stars.

* * * * *

They come, they go,
 Those sweet impressions spent on separate souls,
 Like rain-drops on the endless ocean-plains,
 Lost as they fall. The world rolls on ; lives spring,
 Blossom and fade ; the play of life is played
 More vivid than of old, on a wider stage,
 With more consummate actors ; yet the dull,
 Cold jaws of sullen silence swallow up
 The strain, and it is lost.

* * * * *

Only the stress,
 The pain, the hope, the longing, the constraint
 Of limited faculties circling round and round
 The grim circumference, and finding naught
 Of outlet to the dread unknown beyond,
 Can lend the poet voice. Only the weight,
 The dulness of our senses, which makes dumb
 And hushes half the finer utterance,
 Makes possible the song, and modulates
 The too-exalted music, that it falls
 So soft upon the listening soul, that life,
 Not withered by the awful harmony,
 Nor dumb with too much sweetness, nor struck blind
 By the too vivid presence of the Unknown,
 Fulfils its round of duty—elevated,
 Not slain, by too much splendour—comforted,

Not thunder-smitten—soothed, not laid asleep—
And ever through the devious maze of being,
Fares in slow, narrowing cycles to the end."

This is just what Emerson saw when he wrote "In love, in art, in avarice, in politics, in labour, in games, we study to utter our painful secret. The man is only half himself; the other half is his expression. Notwithstanding this necessity to be published, adequate expression is rare."

High aims and ennobling ambitions pursued with earnest strivings and heroic self-sacrifice for their own sake, as a factor in the development of character, are sympathetically set forth in the writings of the poet; and in this, surely he may be credited with reflecting the ethical spirit of the age. The boy found digging for the Infinite in a New-England back-yard might very well stand as the translator into modern life of the mental attitude indicated in Sir Philip Sidney's lines: "Who shootes at the mid-day sonne, though he be sure he shall never hit the marke; yet as sure he is, he shall shoote higher than who aymes but at a bush." Certainly failure after earnest and persistent struggle is better and grander than ordinary effort which precludes the possibility alike of failure or success; for—

"They fail, and they alone, who have not striven."

Mr. Morris writes, in the "Epic of Hades,"

"I do not blame
Phœbus, or Nature, which has set this bar
Betwixt success and failure, for I know
How far high failure overleaps the bound
Of low successes."

"But those who hear
Some fair faint echoes, though the crowd be deaf,

And see the white god's garments on the hills,
Which the crowd sees not, though they may not find
Fit music for their visions ; they are blest,
Not pitiable."

"Yet I judge it better indeed
To seek in life, as now I know I sought,
Some fair impossible Love, which slays our life,
Some fair ideal raised too high for man ;
And failing, to grow mad, and cease to be,
Than to decline, as they do who have found
Broad-paunched content and weal and happiness :
And so an end. For one day, as I know,
The high aim unfulfilled, fulfils itself ;
The deep unsatisfied thirst, is satisfied."

Mr. Lewis Morris' attitude with regard to the outlook of the times is that of cheerful optimism. The world has never wearied of giving itself hard names. Long before Mr. Alfred Austin's eloquent tirade against the days we live in, it was considered both convenient and smart to throw mud at the fair "present." Men, great and small, have found it suit their purpose to either manufacture a phrase for themselves, or else to sigh and groan with Hamlet :—

"The time is out of joint ; O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right,"—

as if God ever used sickly squeakers to set His work straight. If we bestow but a cursory glance at Mr. Morris' verse, we find that he proclaims for the life of to-day in no uncertain manner ; for he is conscious of man's greatness, and is "deeply thrilled by the spectacle of the nobility and beauty interwoven with the universe." The following lines from "The Treasure of Hope" will at least indicate his standpoint :—

"Strong souls within the present live ;
The future veiled,—the past forgot :

Grasping what is, with hands of steel,
They bend what shall be, to their will;
And blind alike to doubt and dread,
The End, for which they are, fulfil."

Closely dependent on this mental attitude is his recognition of the earnestness of life:—

"Life is a chase
And man the hunter, always following on,
With hounds of rushing thought or fiery sense,
Some hidden truth or beauty, fleeting still
For ever through the thick-leaved coverts deep
And wind-worn wolds of time. And if he turn
A moment from the hot pursuit to seize
Some chance-brought sweetness, other than the search
To which his soul is set,—some dalliance,
Some outward shape of Art, some lower love,
Some charm of wealth and sleek content and home,—
Then if he check an instant, the swift chase
Of fierce untempered energies which pursue,
With jaws unsated and a thirst for act,
Bears down on him with clanging shock, and whelms
His prize and him in ruin."

Mr. Morris has by no means confined his attention to poetry. We find him serving on Lord Aberdare's Commission of Inquiry into the Higher Education of the Principality; connected with the government of the three Welsh Colleges; and occupying the chair of the National Eisteddfod Association. He is a justice of the peace for his native county, and has been engaged in politics. He stood for the Carmarthen Boroughs in 1881, but retired before the election. In 1886 he contested the Pembroke Boroughs, but without success.

J. ROGERS REES.

SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.

1874.

LEWIS MORRIS.

I.—ODE ON A FAIR SPRING MORNING.

COME, friend, let us forget
The turmoil of the world a little while,
For now the soft skies smile,
The fields with flowers are set.
Let us away awhile
With fierce unrest and carking thoughts of care,
And breathe a little while the jocund air,
And sing the joyous measures sung
By those free singers, when the world was young.
For still the world is young, for still the spring
Renews itself, and still the lengthening hours
Bring back the month of flowers.
The leaves are green to-day as those of old,
For Chaucer and for Shakspeare; still the gold
Of August gilds the rippling breadths of wheat;
Young maids are fair and sweet
As when they frolicked gay, with flashing feet,
Round the old May-pole. All young things rejoice.
No sorrow dulls the blackbird's mellow voice,
Thro' the clear summer dawns or twilights long.
With aspect not more dim
Thro' space the planets swim
Than of old time o'er the Chaldean plain.
We only, we alone,
Let jarring discords mar our song.
And find our music take a lower tone.
We only with dim eyes
And laboured vision feebly strain,
And flout the undying splendours of the skies.

Oh, see how glorious show,
On this fair morn in May, the clear-cut hills,
The dewy lawns, the hawthorns white,
Argent on plains of gold, the growing light
Pure as when first on the young earth
The faint warm sunlight came to birth.
There is a nameless air
Of sweet renewal over all which fills
The earth and sky with life, and everywhere,
Before the scarce seen sun begins to glow,
The birds awake which slumbered all night long,
And with a gush of song,
First doubting of their strain, then full and wide
Raise their fresh hymns thro' all the country side ;
Already, above the dewy clover,
The soaring lark begins to hover
Over his mate's low nest ;
And soon, from childhood's early rest
In hall and cottage, to the casement rise
The little ones with their fresh morning eyes.
And gaze on the old Earth, which still grows new,
And see the tranquil heaven's unclouded blue,
And, since as yet no sight nor sound of toil
The fair spread, peaceful picture comes to soil,
Look from their young and steadfast eyes
With such an artless sweet surprise
As Adam knew, when first on either hand
He saw the virgin landscapes of the morning land,

* * * * *

But grows the world then old ?
Nay, all things that are born of time
Spring upwards, and expand from youth to prime,
Spring up from flower to fruit,
From song-tide till the days are mute,

Green blade to ear of gold.
But not the less through the eternal round
The sleep of winter wakes in days of spring,
And not the less the bare and frozen ground
Grows blithe with blooms that burst and birds that sing.
Nature is deathless ; herb and tree,
Through time that has been and shall be,
Change not, although the outward form
Seem now the columned palm
Nourished in zones of calm,
And now the gnarled oak that defies the storm.
The cedar's thousand summers are no more
To her than are the fleeting petals gay
Which the young spring, ere March is o'er,
Scarce offered, takes away.
Eternal are her works. Unchanging she,
Alike in short-lived flower and ever-changing sea.

We, too, are deathless ; we,
Eternal as the Earth,
We cannot cease to be
While springtide comes or birth.
If our being cease to hold
Reflected lights divine
On budding lives, they day by day do shine
With unabated gold.
Though lost it may be to our mortal sight,
It cannot be that any perish quite—
Only the baser part forgets to be.
And if within the hidden Treasury
Of the great Ruler we awhile should rest,
Or issue with a higher stamp imprest,
With all our baser alloy purged and spent,
Were we not thus content ?

Our thoughts too mighty are
To be within our span of years confined,
Too deep and wide and far,
The hopes, the fears, that crowd the labouring mind,
The sorrows that oppress,
The sanctities that bless,
Are vaster than this petty stage of things.
The soaring fancy mounts on easy wings
Beyond the glimmer of the furthest star.
The watcher who with patient eye
Scans the illumined sky,
Knows when the outward rushing fire shall turn,
And in far ages hence shall brightly burn
For eyes to-day undreamt of. The clear voice
From Greece or Israel thro' the centuries heard
Still bids us tremble or rejoice,
Stronger than living look or word ;
The love of home or race,
Which doth transfigure us, and seems to bring
On every heaven-lit face
Some shadow of the glory of our King,
Fades not on earth, nor with our years doth end ;
Nay, even earth's poor physical powers transcend
The narrow bounds of space and time,
The swift thought by some mystic sympathy
Speeding through desert sand, and storm-tost sea.
And shall we hold the range of mind
Is to our little lives confined ;
That the pure heart in some blest sphere above,
Loves not which here was set on fire of love ;
The clear eye scans not still, which here could scan
The confines of the Universal plan ;
The seer nor speaks nor thinks his thoughts sublime
And all of Homer is a speck of lime ?

Nay, friend, let us forget
The conflicts of our doubt a little while,
Again our springs shall smile ;
We shall not perish yet.
If God so guide our fate,
The nobler portions of ourselves shall last
Till all the lower rounds of life be past,
And we, regenerate.
We too again shall rise,
The same and not the same,
As daily rise upon the orient skies
New dawns with wheels of flame.
So, if it worthy prove,
Our being, self-perfected, shall upward move
To higher essence, and still higher grown,
Not sweeping idle harps before a throne,
Nor spending praise where is no need of praise,
But through unnumbered lives and ages come
Of pure laborious days,
To an eternal home,
Where spring is not, nor birth, nor any dawn,
But life's full noontide never is withdrawn.

II.—THE BIRTH OF VERSE.

BLIND thoughts which occupy the brain,
Dumb melodies which fill the ear,
Dim perturbations, precious pain,
A gleam of hope, a chill of fear,—
These seize the poet's soul, and mould
The ore of fancy into gold.

And first no definite thought there is
In all that affluence of sound,
Like those sweet formless melodies
Piped to the listening woods around,

By birds which never teacher had
But love and knowledge: they are glad.

Till, when the chambers of the soul
Are filled with inarticulate airs,
A spirit comes which doth control
The music, and its end prepares;
And, with a power serene and strong,
Shapes these wild melodies to song.

Or haply, thoughts which glow and burn
Await long time the fitting strain,
Which, swiftly swelling, seems to turn
The silence to a load of pain;
And somewhat in him seems to cry,
"I will have utterance, or I die!"

Then of a sudden, full, complete,
The strong strain bursting into sound,
Words come with rhythmic rush of feet,
Fit music girds the language round,
And with a sweetness all unsought
Soars up the winged embodied thought.

But howsoever they may rise,
Fit words and music come to birth;
There soars an angel to the skies,
There walks a Presence on the earth—
A something which shall yet inspire
Myriads of souls unborn with fire.—

And when his voice is hushed and dumb,
The flame burnt out, the glory dead,
He feels a thrill of wonder come
At that which his poor tongue has said;
And thinks of each diviner line—
"Only the hand that wrote was mine."

THE EPIC OF HADES.

1876.

LEWIS MORRIS.

MARSYAS.

ONCE among the Phrygian hills
I lay a-musing—while the silly sheep
Wandered among the thyme—upon the bank
Of a clear mountain stream, beneath the pines,
Safe hidden from the noon. A dreamy haze
Played on the uplands, but the hills were clear
In sunlight, and no cloud was on the sky.
It was the time when a deep silence comes
Upon the summer earth, and all the birds
Have ceased from singing, and the world is still
As midnight, and if any live thing move—
Some fur-clad creature, or cool gliding snake—
Within the pipy overgrowth of weeds,
The ear can catch the rustle, and the trees
And earth and air are listening. As I lay,
Faintly, as in a dream, I seemed to hear
A tender music, like the *Æolian* chords,
Sound low within the woodland, whence the stream,
Flowed full, yet silent. Long, with ear to ground,
I hearkened; and the sweet strain, fuller grown,
Rounder and clearer came, and danced along
In mirthful measure now, and now grown grave
In dying falls, and sweeter and more clear,
Tripping at nuptials and high revelry,
Wailing at burials, rapt in soaring thoughts,
Chanting strange sea-tales full of mystery,
Touching all chords of being, and life and death,
Now rose, now sank, and always was divine,
So strange the music came.

Till, as I lay
Enraptured, swift a sudden discord rang,
And all the sound grew still, a sudden flash,
As from a sunlit jewel, fired the wood,
A noise of water smitten, and on the hills
A fair white fleece of cloud, which swiftly climbed
Into the farthest heaven. Then, as I mused,
Knowing a parting goddess, straight I saw
A sudden splendour float upon the stream,
And knew it for this jewelled flute, which paused
Before me on an eddy. It I snatched
Eager, and to my ardent lips I bore
The wonder, and behold, with the first breath—
The first warm human breath, the silent strains,
The half-drowned notes which late the goddess blew,
Revived and sounded, clearer, sweeter far
Than mortal skill could make ; so with delight
I left my flocks to wander o'er the wastes
Untended, and the wolves and eagles seized
The tender lambs, but I was for my art—
Nought else ; and though the high-pitched notes divine
Grew faint, yet something lingered, and at last
So sweet a note I sounded of my skill,
That all the Phrygian highlands, all the white
Hill villages, were fain to hear the strain,
Which the mad shepherd made.

So, overbold,
And rapt in my new art, at last I dared
To challenge Phœbus' self.

'Twas a fair day
When sudden, on the mountain side I saw
A train of fleecy clouds in a white band
Descending. Down the gleaming pinnacles
And difficult crags they floated, and the arch,

Drawn with its thousand hues against the sun,
Hung like a glory o'er them. Midst the pines
They clothed themselves with form, and straight I
knew

The immortals. Young Apollo, with his lyre,
Kissed by the sun, and all the Muses clad
In robes of gleaming white ; then a great fear,
Yet mixed with joy, assailed me, for I knew
Myself a mortal equalled with the gods.

Ah me ! how fair they were ! how fair and dread
In face and form, they showed, when now they came
Upon the thymy slope, and the young god
Lay with his choir around him, beautiful
And bold as Youth and Dawn ! There was no cloud
Upon the sky, nor any sound at all
When I begun my strain. No coward fear
Of what might come restrained me ; but an awe
Of those immortal eyes and ears divine
Looking and listening. All the earth seemed full
Of ears for me alone—the woods, the fields,
The hills, the skies were listening. Scarce a sound
My flute might make, such subtle harmonies
The silence seemed to weave round me and flout
The half unuttered thought. Till last I blew
As now, a hesitating note, and lo !
The breath divine, lingering on mortal lips,
Hurried my soul along to such fair rhymes,
Sweeter than wont, that swift I knew my life
Rise up within me, and expand, and all
The human, which so nearly is divine,
Was glorified, and on the Muses' lips,
And in their lovely eyes, I saw a fair
Approval, and my soul in me was glad.

For all the strains I blew were strains of love—
Love striving, love triumphant, love that lies
Within belovèd arms, and wreathes his locks
With flowers, and lets the world go by and sings
Unheeding; and I saw a kindly gleam
Within the Muses' eyes, who were, indeed,
Women, though god-like.

But upon the face
Of the young Sun-god only haughty scorn
Sate, and he swiftly struck his golden lyre,
And played the Song of Life; and lo, I knew
My strain, how earthy! Oh, to hear the young
Apollo playing! and the hidden cells
And chambers of the universe displayed,
Before the charmèd sound! I seemed to float
In some enchanted cave, where the wave dips
In from the sunlit sea, and floods its depths
With reflex hues of heaven. My soul was rapt
By that I heard, and dared to wish no more
For victory; and yet because the sound
Of music that is born of human breath
Comes straighter from the soul than any strain
The hand alone can make, therefore I knew,
With a mixed thrill of pity and delight,
The nine Immortal Sisters hardly touched
By this fine strain of music, as by mine,
And when the high lay trembled to its close,
Still doubting.

Then upon the Sun-god's face
There passed a cold proud smile. He swept his lyre
Once more, then laid it down, and then with voice,
The voice of godhead, sang. Oh, ecstasy,
Oh happiness of him who once has heard
Apollo singing! For his ears the sound

Of grosser music dies, and all the earth
Is full of subtle undertones, which change
The listener and transform him. As he sang—
Of what I know not, but the music touched
Each chord of being—I felt my secret life
Stand open to it, as the parched earth yearns
To drink the summer rain ; and at the call
Of those refreshing waters, all my thought
Stir from its dark and secret depths, and burst
Into sweet, odorous flowers, and from their wells
Deep call to deep, and all the mystery
Of all that is, laid open. As he sang,
I saw the Nine, with lovely pitying eyes,
Sign He has conquered ! Yet I felt no pang
Of fear, only deep joy that I had heard
Such music while I lived, even though it brought
Torture and death. For what were it to lie
Sleek, crowned with roses, drinking vulgar praise,
And surfeited with offerings, the dull gift
Of ignorant hands, all which I might have known,
To this diviner failure ? Godlike 'tis
To fail upon the icy ledge, and fall
Where other footsteps dare not. So I knew
My fate, and it was near.

For to pine

They bound me willing, and with cruel stripes
Tore me, and took my life.

GWEN.

1879.

LEWIS MORRIS.

(ACT I., SCENE I.)

HENRY.

THE sweet cold air of these untrodden hills
Breathes gently. From the bustle of the inn
I turn refreshed to this free mountain-side,
And listen to the innumerable sound
Of the loud brook beneath, which roars and spumes
Brown-white against the granite. These thick firs
Shed balm upon the evening air ; there comes
No footstep but the rabbit's or the shrew's
Upon this grassy path, which winds and winds
Around the hill-side, under promontories
Of gold and purple, to the grey old church,
Where, chancing yesterday at eve, I caught
The sound of hymns, richer and fuller far
Than those of yore ; and, hidden within the porch,
Heard the prayers rising in a tongue unknown,
But musical as Greek ; and not unmoved
Watched the loud preacher, firing with his theme,
Grow rhythmic, and the answering moans which showed
He touches the peasant heart.

Ah, it was long
Since I had heard men pray. I have seen the cloud
Of incense rolling to the fretted roofs
Of dim cathedrals in the fair old lands
Where Faith weds not with Reason ; I have heard
The Benediction service, pure and sweet,
Lit by young voices : I have watched with fear
In college aisles the polished, delicate priest

Poise his smooth periods on the razor edge
Of a too fine-drawn logic ; I have stood
And listened all unmoved, or all ashamed
That I was moved a little, by the trick
And artifice of speech which, though I knew it,
Could cheat the heart a moment, while the preacher
Enchained his ignorant thousands. None of these
Moved me as that unknown tongue yesterday.
I thought my faith reviving. Tush ! what folly !
That dried long years ago from the roots, dried up
By the strong glare of knowledge, nor could aught
Of all the miracles the churchmen feign
E'er water it to life. That died long since,
Killed dead by German learning and the strong
And arrogant Priests of Science. Yet God knows—
If God there be—I would give my life to know
The strong Belief of old, when little hands
Were folded morn and eve, and little eyes
Scarce open from the night, or half weighed down
By the long hours of play, were raised to see
Heaven in a mother's gaze.

THE ODE OF LIFE.

1880.

LEWIS MORRIS.

THE ODE OF PERFECT YEARS.

III.—LABOUR.

THEY do the Maker wrong
Who with the closing days of youth
Shut fast the gate of Song ;
Nor ever can I hold it truth,
With those who feign to tell the tale of life,
That only love is worth, the love that binds
A youth and maid, nor care at all
For the long summer ere the fruit shall fall,
And hold not fit for song the glorious strife,
The joy of toil and thought, the clash of vigorous minds,
When knowledge flies before, and we pursue,
And who the Fair once followed, follow now the True.
Ah, full fair life ! if something we have lost,
If never more again
We feel the ancient joy, the former pain,
If no more passion-tost
Upon the tides of life we hurry by,
The white waves laughing as we plunge along,
Nor watch the light clouds drift along the sky,
While the glad South snatches us swift and strong
To some blest isle beyond the purple wave,
Where Love is Queen and Mirth, nor Prudence grave
Nor Wisdom frowns, but to be glad is all,
From jocund morn till dewy evening fall ;
Oh, if that sky is dark—those winds are still ;
Another day has risen : again from the East
Our treasure is increased ;
And as the orient Lord begins to grow,
New airs begin to blow,

And on the calm majestic tide
Our full-sailed galleon comes to glide,
Love, with its little skiff, has gone,
But Life's great bark sails on.

Toil is the law of life, and its best fruit ;
This from the uncaring brute
Divides ;—this and the prescient mind whose store
Grows daily more and more.
Toil is the mother of wealth,
The nurse of health ;
Toil 'tis that gives the zest
To well-earned rest ;
The law of life laid broad and deep
As are the fixed foundations of the sea,
The medicine of grief, the remedy,
Wherefrom Life giveth his beloved sleep.
Oh, labour truly blest !
Thou rulest all the race ;
Over all the toiling earth I see thy gracious face
Stand forth confest.
Wherever thou art least,
In those fair lands beneath the tropic blaze,
The slothful savage, likened to the beast,
Drags on his soulless length of days ;
Where most thou art,
Man rises upward to a loftier height,
And views the earth and heaven with clearer sight,
And holds a cleaner heart.

I see the toilers with the awaking morn,
Ere yet the day is born,
Go forth to labour over all the earth.
In northern darkness, 'midst the wintry rain,

The great bell clangs thro' the smoke-laden air ;
And ere light comes the workers gather there,
While the great engines throb, and swift wheels turn,
And the long, sickly gaslights flare and burn ;
I hear the slow winch creak above the pit,
While the black workers, who have toiled all night,
Rise, dazed, to rest and light ;
I see the fisher on the waking sea ;
The great ship, full-manned, heaving silently
Across the foam ; reapers in yellow corn ;
The frosty shepherd in the early morn ;
The naked worker bent among the cane
Or cotton ; the vinedresser, lean and brown ;
The thousand labours of the busy town ;
The myriad trades which in each clime and race
Build up man's dwelling-place ;
I see the countless toiling multitude ;
And all I see is good.

But to ends nobler still
The nobler workers to the world are bent.
It is not best in an inglorious ease
To sink and dull content,
When wild revolts and hopeless miseries
The unquiet nations fill ;
It is not best to rot
In dull observance, while the bitter cry
Of weak and friendless sufferers rends the sky,
Wailing their hopeless lot ;
Or rest in coward fear on former gain,
Making old joys supply the present pain.

Nay best it is indeed
To spend ourselves upon the general good ;
And, oft misunderstood,

To strive to lift the knees and limbs that bleed ;—
This is the best, the fullest meed.
Let ignorance assail or hatred sneer ;
Who loves his race he shall not fear ;
He suffers not for long,
Who doth his soul possess in loving, and grows strong.

Oh, student ! far into the night
From youth to age
Bent low upon the blinding page,
Content to catch some gleam of light ;
Art thou not happy, though the world pass by ?—
Happy though Honours seek thee not, nor Fame,
And no man knows thy name ?—
Happy in that blest company of old
Whose names are writ in characters of gold
Upon the rocks of Time, the glorious band
Who on the shining mountains stand,
Thinker and jurist, bard or seer,
Whatever name is brightest and most dear ?

Or thou with docile hand,
Obedient to the visionary eye,
Who 'midst art's precious work dost choose to stand
Amid the great ones of the days gone by.
Oh, blest and glorious lot, alway to be
With dreams of beauty compassed round about !
The godlike mother and the child divine,
Or land or sea or sky, in calm or storm,
Nature's sincerest verities of form—
To see from canvas or from marble shine,
Little by little orbing gradually,
Some trace of hidden Godhead gleaming out !
Or who, from heart and brain inspired, create,
Defying time, defying fate,

Some deathless theme and high,
Some verse which cannot die,
Some lesson which shall still be said
Altho' their tongue be lost and dead ;
Or who, in daily labour's trivial round,
Their fitting work have found ;
Or who on high, guiding the ear of State,
Are set, a people's envy and their pride,
Who, spurning rank and ease and wealth,
And setting pleasure aside and health,
And meeting contumely oft and hate,
Have lived laborious lives and all too early died.

Or shall I silence keep
Of you, oh ministering women fair,
Who, while the world lies sunk in careless sleep,
Still for the love of God and man can bear
To watch by alien sick-beds, and to guard
With little hope and scant reward,
'Midst misery and foul infected air,
The friendless and the dying ? Shall I dare
To sing of labour's meed, nor hold you dear ?
Dear souls, your joys are great, and yet not wholly here ;
In heaven they blossom best and grow complete,
And beautiful upon the eternal mountains are your feet.

Ay, labour, thou art blest.
From all the earth, thy voice, a constant prayer,
Soars upward day and night :
A voice of aspiration after right ;
A voice of effort yearning for its rest ;
A voice of high hope conquering despair !

SONGS UNSUNG.

1883.

LEWIS MORRIS.

PICTURES.—I.

(SELECTED)

LONG-ROLLING surges of a falling sea,
Smiting the sheer cliffs of an unknown shore ;
And by a fanged rock, swaying helplessly
A mast with broken cordage—nothing more.

Three peaks, one loftier, all in virgin white,
Poised high in cloudland when the day is done,
And on the mid-most, far above the night,
The rose-red of the long-departed sun.

A darkling gateway, thronged with entering ghosts,
And a grave janitor, who seems to say :
“Woe, woe to youth, to life, which idly boasts ;
I am the End, and mine the appointed Way !”

A young Faun making music on a reed,
Deep in a leafy dell in Arcady :
Three girl-nymphs fair, in musing thought take heed
Of the strange youth's mysterious melody.

A flare of lamplight in a shameful place
Full of wild revel and unchecked offence,
And in the midst, one fresh scarce-sullied face,
Within her eyes, a dreadful innocence.

A quire of seraphs, chanting row on row,
With lute and viol and high trumpet notes ;
And, above all, their soft young eyes aglow—
Child angels, making laud from full clear throats.

SONGS OF BRITAIN.

1887.

LEWIS MORRIS.

I.—ON A THRUSH SINGING IN AUTUMN.

SWEET singer of the Spring, when the new world
Was filled with song and bloom, and the fresh year
Tripped, like a lamb tender and void of fear,
Through daisied grass and juicy leaves unfurled,
Where is thy liquid voice
That all day would rejoice ?
Where now thy sweet and homely call,
Which from gray dawn to evening's chilling fall
Would echo from thin copse and tasselled brake,
For homely duty tuned and love's sweet sake ?
The spring-tide passed, high summer soon should come.
The woods grew thick, the meads a deeper hue ;
The pipy summer growths swelled, lush and tall ;
The sharp scythes swept at daybreak through the dew.
Thou didst not heed at all,
The prodigal voice grew dumb ;
No more with song might'st thou beguile,
She sitting on her speckled eggs the while,
Thy mate's long vigil as the slow days went,
Solacing her with lays of measureless content.

Nay, nay, thy voice was Duty's, nor would dare
Sing were love fled, though still the world were fair ;
The summer waxed and waned, the nights grew cold,
The sheep were thick within the wattled fold,
The woods began to moan,
Dumb wert thou and alone ;

Yet now, when leaves are sere, thy ancient note
Comes low and halting from thy doubtful throat.
Oh, lonely loveless voice, what dost thou here
In the deep silence of the fading year?

Thus do I read the answer of thy song :
"I sang when winds blew chilly all day long ;
I sang because hope came and joy was near,
I sang a little while, I made good cheer ;
In summer's cloudless day
My music died away ;
But now the hope and glory of the year
Are dead and gone, a little while I sing
Songs of regret for days no longer here,
And touched with presage of the far-off Spring."

Is this the meaning of thy note, fair bird ?
Or do we read into thy simple brain
Echoes of thoughts which human hearts have stirred,
High-soaring joy and melancholy pain ?
Nay, nay, that lingering note
Belated from thy throat—
"Regret," is what it sings, "regret, regret !
The dear days pass, but are not wholly gone.
In praise of those I let my song go on ;
'Tis sweeter to remember than forget."

II.—IN SPRING-TIDE.

THIS is the hour, the day,
The time, the season sweet.
Quick ! hasten, laggard feet,
Brook not delay ;
Love flies, youth pauses, Maytide will not last,
Forth, forth while yet 'tis time, before the Spring
is past.

The Summer's glories shine
From all her garden ground,
With lilies pranked around,
And roses fine ;
But the pink blooms or white upon the bursting
trees,
Primrose and violet sweet, what charm has June
like these ?

This is the time of song.
From many a joyous throat,
Mute all the dull year long,
Soars love's clear note ;
Summer is dumb, and faint with dust and heat ;
This is the mirthful time when every sound is sweet.

Fair day of larger light,
Life's own appointed hour,
Young souls bud forth in white—
The world's a-flower ;
Thrill youthful heart ; soar upward limpid voice ;
Blossoming time is come—rejoice, rejoice, rejoice !

Sir Alfred Lyall.

1835.

SIR ALFRED COMYNS LYALL, son of the Rev. Alfred Lyall, was born at Coulston, Surrey, in 1835. He was educated at Eton, and subsequently entered the Indian civil service. He was appointed Home Secretary in India 1873, and Foreign Secretary 1878. He was made K.C.B. in 1881, and Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces 1882. In 1888 he was appointed member of the Council of India.

In 1882 Sir Alfred Lyall published a volume of Asiatic studies, religious and social, which was followed by a Biography of Warren Hastings, written for the English "Men of Action" series (1889), and a volume of poems entitled "Verses Written in India," which was also published in 1889. Almost all the poems are upon Indian subjects, three short examples of which—"The Amir's Message" and "Studies at Delhi," I. and II.—are included in the following pages. "Theology in Extremis" is a powerful poem, as is also "Retrospection." "The Old Pindaree" gives expression to the feeling of the old-fashioned military classes in India toward English rule; while "The Land of Regret" expresses English discontent under the physical discomforts of Indian acclimatisation.

"Verses Written in India" demonstrate powers

from which more might have been expected with larger leisure for exercise. The Indian poems are a welcome and distinguished addition to that Indian poetry which is the outcome of the modern conditions of Anglo-Indian empire, a body of verse to which Sir Francis Hastings Doyle was an early—and Mr. Rudyard Kipling is a later—contributor. The other poems of the volume show Sir Alfred Lyall to have a wider range than that of exclusively Indian subjects, and prove that had he not devoted his life to Indian service he might yet have won distinction among the poets of modern English life.

ALFRED H. MILES.

VERSES WRITTEN IN INDIA.

SIR ALFRED LYALL.

I.

THE AMIR'S MESSAGE.

1882.

I.

ABDURRAHMÁN, the Duráni Khán to the Ghilzaic Chief wrote he :

"God has made me Amir of the Afgháns, but thou on thy hills art free.

I rule by the sword and signet, I care not to flatter or bribe ;

I take nor fee nor tribute of the noble Ghilzaie tribe ;
Nor pledge nor promise I ask of thee ; I pardon, if all men know

That thy heart has been hard against me, and thy friend has been my foe.

For the sons of Sher Ali are exiles, their best men broken or fled,

And those who escaped are homeless, and all whom I found are dead.

Such is the work of the Merciful, whose will is to smite or to save ;

It is He gives wealth and vengeance, or tears o'er a bloodstained grave.

Now, while the sounds are a moment still, ere ever
fresh blood shall run,
I look for a wise man's counsel, and I would that
Afgháns were one.
From Merve, last home of the free-lance, the clans-
men are scattering far,
And the Turkmán horses are harnessed to the guns
of the Russian Czar.
So choose thou of all my liegemen, or choose thou
of all my host,
One true man, loyal-hearted, whomever thou trustest
most,
Whom thy tribe has known and honoured, to bring
thee in safety and peace ;
Thou shalt ride unscathed to Kábul, and the feud of
our lives shall cease."

II.

The Ghilzaie Chief wrote answer—"Our paths are
narrow and steep,
The sun burns fierce in the valleys, and the snow-
fed streams run deep ;
The fords of the Kábul river are watched by the
Afreedee ;
We harried his folk last springtide, and he keeps
good memory.
High stands by Kábul citadel, where many have
room and rest ;
The Amirs give welcome entry, but they speed not
a parting guest ;
So a stranger needs safe escort, and the oath of a
valiant friend ;
Whom shall I choose of those I know ? whom ask
the Amir to send ?

Wilt thou send the Vagir, Noor Ahmed, the man
whom the Ghilzaies trust ?

He has long lain lost in a dungeon, his true bold
heart is dust.

Wilt thou send the Jamsheedeæ Ága, who was called
from the western plain ?

He left the black tents of his horsemen, and he led
them never again.

Shall I ask for the Moollah, in Ghuzni to whom all
Afgháns rise ?

He was bid last year to thy banqueting—his soul is
in paradise.

Where is the chief Faizulla, to pledge me the word
of his clan ?

He is far from his pine-clad highlands, and the
vineyards of Kohistán :

He is gone with the rest—all vanished ; he passed
through thy citadel gate ;

Will they come now, these I have chosen ? I watch
for their faces and wait ;

For the night-shade falls over Kábul, and dark is
the downward track,

And the guardian hills ring an echo of voices that
warn me back ;

Lt the Ghilzaie bide on his mountain, and depart,
as thy message has said,

“ When but one sure friend the Amir shall send,—
when the tombs give up their dead.”

II.

STUDIES AT DELHI.

1876.

I.—THE HINDU ASCETIC.

HERE as I sit by the Jumna bank,
Watching the flow of the sacred stream
Pass me the legions, rank on rank,
And the cannon roar, and the bayonets gleam.
Is it a god or a king that comes ?
Both are evil, and both are strong ;
With women and worshipping, dancing and drums,
Carry your gods and your kings along.
Fanciful shapes of a plastic earth,
These are the visions that weary the eye ;
These I may 'scape by a luckier birth,
Musing, and fasting, and hoping to die.
When shall these phantoms flicker away ?
Like the smoke of the guns on the wind-swept hill,
Like the sounds and colours of yesterday :
And the soul have rest, and the air be still.

II.—BADMINTON.

HARDLY a shot from the gate we stormed,
Under the Moree battlements shade ;
Close to the glacis our game was formed,
There had the fight been, and there we played.
Lightly the demoiselles tittered and leapt,
Merrily capered the players all ;
North, was the garden where Nicholson slept,
South, was the sweep of a battered wall.
Near me a Musalmán, civil and mild,
Watched as the shuttlecocks rose and fell ;
And he said, as he counted his beads and smiled,
"God smite their souls to the depths of hell."

James Thomson.

1834—1882.

JAMES THOMSON, second poet of that name, was born at Port Glasgow, on the 23rd of November, 1834. Both his parents were Scotch, and his father, the son of a Scotch weaver, had attained a good position in the merchant navy. His mother was a zealous Irvingite, and Mr. Dobell (Thomson's excellent friend and biographer) thinks that it was to her the poet owed his deeply emotional imaginative temperament. The father was paralyzed while on a distant voyage; and, later, contracted a habit of intemperance, which reduced the family to poverty.

James was admitted to the Royal Caledonian Asylum; his mother dying shortly after, and his father living on with mental powers impaired.

On leaving the asylum he qualified himself for the post of assistant schoolmaster in the army, and was sent to join the garrison stationed at Ballincolly, near Cork. This post, though not very congenial, left him a considerable leisure for study. He contracted there a warm friendship with Joseph Barnes, garrison-master of the station, whose wife he addresses as the "second mother of my orphaned youth." His friendships were warm, and his friends fond of him; probably only the drink-madness that overcame him in his misery of later years prevented a few of these being permanent.

Here also he was introduced to one destined to exercise a profound influence over his future, a charming and beautiful girl, who seems to have reciprocated his attachment, but death took her from him. Her name was Mathilda Weller, and she is said to have resembled the descriptions of Eva S. Clair in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The daughter of an armourer-sergeant, she was unusually lovely, both in soul and body.

"For there my own good angel took my hand ;
And filled my soul with glory of her eyes . . .
How soon, how soon God called her from my side
Back to her own celestial sphere of day !
And ever since she ceased to be my guide,
I reel and stumble on life's solemn way.
Ah ! ever since her eyes withdrew their light,
I wander lost in blackest, stormy night."

Inscrutable is the dispensation which so early removed this girl, whose gentle hand might have upheld, and saved our poet both from himself and from the enemies around him ; though Mr. Foote, his intimate friend, thinks that none could have delivered him from his inborn hypochondria and inherited craving, that he would only have dragged the beloved one down.

Thomson's friendship for Mr. Bradlaugh was formed early ; they were in the service together as youths of sixteen and seventeen. Thomson had been brought up a Presbyterian, and when he met Bradlaugh was still a believer in Christianity. Many were the arguments between them ; nor could these be without effect on the poet's convictions, who was then beginning the study of Shelley, with an ardent love for his poetry. After two years he proceeded to the Chelsea Training College to finish his professional studies.

It was here that he received news of the death of the girl he loved. For three days he neither ate nor drank, and "it can hardly be doubted," says Mr. Dobell, "that he intended to starve himself to death." Thenceforth, without hope and almost without object, his was rather a death in life than a healthy, natural existence. His sorrow found voice in some touching lines commencing "I had a love." Mathilda is also alluded to in an exquisite poem (his first published) the "Fadeless Bower," written 1858, describing the scene, fadeless for memory and imagination, where the young lovers (he but eighteen, she fourteen) plighted their troth.

Mathilda is indeed the Beatrice of Thomson. In "The Deliverer," a very remarkable piece published so late as 1881, the unhappy poet finds release from the mephitic gloom that oppressed him and his later work, breaking forth, if but for a moment, into the clearer air of his earlier utterance. Here the "Deliverer" is a visionary seraph, but the same woman-spirit, imparadised. Leopardi and Thomson (who has been called the second Leopardi) were poets of the broken heart, as in a less degree also were Byron and Heine. But we ought also to note the immense love of which our English pessimist was capable, and the full capacity for joy. His early poetry is all idealistic, mystical, exhaling impassioned affection, and breathing the "difficult iced air" of Faith's mountain top. It is the unmistakable utterance of a true poet, unduly neglected because showing a less consummate shaping power than the "City of Dreadful Night." In "Bertram to the Lady Geraldine," and in "Tasso to Leonora," again, we have only to read between the lines to behold

Mathilda as the ideal mistress, raised above the poet's reach for awhile by destiny, yet reserved for him in all fulness when both attain to the profound spiritual union of Eternity. For one main characteristic of Thomson was his love for allegory and symbol; this we find early and late in him. His pessimistic vein indeed is not to be regarded as that most proper and essential to the man merely because it came latest, when his spirit was overclouded by the dark environments of his career, co-operating with and evoking those demons of gloom and intemperate disease which lurked within, only waiting their sinister opportunity. His healthy period was surely that middle time when he worked strong and hopeful, full of human sympathy, and of trust in the great, sound, universal Heart of all, in that overruling Providence which is ever preparing man's undying spirit for larger spheres of life and labour.

The "Doom of a City" (1857) is in parts as fine as the more celebrated poem of which it is the anticipation,—more brilliant in imagery and metaphor, and with more ethereal insight, though less concentration, and command of the artist over his resources. The poem, indeed, has an undertone of deep personal desolation, but it represents men as not quite irresponsible for their sins; the righteous Nemesis visits them with doom, while the excellent are rewarded with more excellence and fuller life. The pseudo-scientific, immoral doctrine, which teaches that unconscious force, producing conscious good and evil, swallows all alike in one senseless annihilation, has not yet been arrived at. Though there is here a personal wail, as of a lost soul, there is more hope for the world.

The purport and substance of Thomson should be gauged by his earlier, quite as much as by his later work, and the manner in that is often good also. We get an exuberant exultation in life, a glad, immense embrace of all Nature (including even Death, the renovator), as characterising the true and "happy poet." Here we have the "Lord of the Castle of Indolence," as lovely, I think, as anything Thomson wrote in his maturity, yet composed at the early age of twenty-five, where the Spenserian measure is used with the skill of his namesake in the masterpiece bearing the same title. As Mr. Salt, in his admirable and sympathetic biography points out, the best commentary on this is the poet's prose essay on Indolence, published in the "Essays and Phantasies," wherein he displays remarkable command of a prose style, suggesting now De Quincey, now Heine, and now Swift. In that essay he describes, with genial admiration, the happy characters who are "idlers by grace," by the mere charm of a royal personality, without effort dispensing happiness around them; but the "*Mater Tenebrarum*" (1859) pierces the heart already with the wail of pessimism; it is a passionate appeal to the soul of his lost love, not to leave him unfriended, if indeed she be yet alive, and not dead utterly.

Thomson left the army in 1862, and his friend, Charles Bradlaugh, found him a clerkship in a solicitor's office, offering him a home also in his own family, at Tottenham, with whom he lived for several happy years. At this time a modest, unaffected man, he was much beloved by those with whom he was on terms of intimacy; letters in French to Mr. Bradlaugh's daughters, even so late as 1874,

when the gloom was habitual with him, are charming for their affectionate playfulness and purity of tone.

Yet, cheerful as he often was, the morbid spell was already upon him, for "the supreme sufferers are the men who have a profound relish for existence," and this relish the poet had. Almost to the last he felt it; witness those really lovely later poems of throbbing passion and springtide ecstasy, replete with melody, "He heard her sing," and "Richard Forest's Midsummer Night," which, with other slighter verses, show that doubtless the poor withering heart of this singer (who should, I think, be placed among our greater poets) might have revived; but the injustice of neglect weighed upon him, and he remained silent for "seven songless years."

The "Sunday up the River" and the "Sunday at Hampstead" of his middle period are gay, jubilant, and full of sympathy with external nature. They have all the vital charm of Clough's beautiful "Bothie." The former is of rare lyrical beauty, and was printed by Kingsley and Froude in *Fraser*, while the latter poem, containing a splendid little lyric, "As we rush, as we rush in the train," though an offence to Bumble, and the "superior person," is also full of vernal joy and playful humour. Seldom, on the other hand, have appeared such terribly veracious creations as the "Insomnia," and "City of Dreadful Night," with their visions of unmitigated pain. Distinct and palpable as sculpture, carven out of Solid Night, these pervade and subdue us with an atmosphere of prevailing horror; and were such poetry the whole of Thomson, despite

its stern pagan stoicism, I confess that I for one could hardly regret the neglect to which his masterly, though unhealthy, and devastating work was long consigned.

During his residence in London Thomson took a close interest in the political and freethought movement, of which the *National Reformer* was the chief organ; and in this paper he had the inestimable advantage of being allowed to say what he chose, and follow the bent of his own genius, contributing to its pages under the signature "B. V." from 1862 to 1874. But, as Mr. Salt remarks, "his intense individuality, coupled with his almost cynical disbelief in the possibility of any real progress, must have always prevented him from giving himself heart and soul to a cause." Yet natural instinct and inclination were all on the side of liberty, and he was secretary for some time to the Polish Committee in London, writing some fine lines on a "Polish Insurgent." Sincere and genuine to the backbone, he has given us some strong and stirring political verse; for example, the severe lines entitled, "L'Ancien Régime." "His higher education," says Mr. Salt, "was wholly self-acquired in the face of constant poverty and the drudgery of an uncongenial profession." "He was a poet who had to battle and struggle with all that was meanest and most harassing in commonplace life."

Two of his most important poems were written in 1861. "Vane's Story," and "To our Ladies of Death"; the former is interesting, but more careless in diction, more *négligé* in style than is usual with Thomson, whose chief stylistic weakness is the occasional use of archaic terms. The poem is not

without influence from the cynicism and persiflage of Heine; but I note also some of the rough Brown-ing manner. It contains an exquisite passage concerning a fountain, emblematic of the poet's own life-experience, and a description of the, to him, ever memorable dance with his lost beloved.

"To our Ladies of Death" is a noble allegory of Death in her varying aspects, suggested by De Quincey's "Suspiria de Profundis."

Thomson was a gentle and kind man; in his prose anticipation of the "City"—"A Lady of Sorrow,"—he concludes:—"In the meanwhile, to love our fellow-prisoners, helping and serving them as we can, is the sanctitude and piety of our miserable existence." With the character of Buddha he expressed the warmest sympathy, and probably the poor and coarse burlesques of Christian dogma likely to wound reverent and loving souls, which he wrote in his later life, are to be attributed to the nether stratum of aggressively atheistic company he so exclusively kept, and to the intemperate habits which grew upon him. On one occasion, after he had left the hospitable house of his friends and was living alone in London lodgings, the children of his landlady (of whom, as of all children, he was fond, with a fully reciprocated affection) going to the door to admit him, closed it again in his face, and told their father that "Mr. Thomson's wicked brother was at the door"; they could not recognise *their* Mr. Thomson in this figure of the dipsomaniac claiming his name. Even his best friends at times found themselves forced from his society; although Mr. Foote tells us that he struggled manfully against this terrible disease.

The fits were always preceded by days of the blackest hypochondria, until at last, in desperation, he flew to the bottle. Except for this infirmity, he was methodical, logical, even mathematical; and when not suffering from depression "the most brilliant talker," says Mr. Foote, "I ever met." He was an inveterate smoker, and when he ceased to contribute to Mr. Bradlaugh's paper, his main source of income was from *Cope's Tobacco Plant*, a magazine to which he contributed some good essays, and a humorous poem about smoking, in Chaucer's vein. He also wrote for the *Secularist*; and was sent out in 1872 to report upon an American silver mine, having been appointed secretary to the company formed to work it; but he returned very shortly, finding the whole concern unsatisfactory. Soon after, he was employed by the proprietors of the *New York World* to go to Spain, as their official correspondent with the Carlists, who were then fighting against the Republican Government. It was not a very eventful journey, and he returned in two months, prostrated by sunstroke.

"In London," says Mr. Dobell, "he lodged in one narrow room. A morning spent at the British Museum, an afternoon walk through the streets, and an evening passed in reading or writing, such was the usual course of his daily life in London. Visits to or from his few friends sometimes varied the monotony of this existence, and now and then he would go to a concert, or to the Italian opera, for he was passionately fond of music." So Thomson paced the dreary ways of that vast murky chaos called London, hardly able to keep his head above water (indeed often going under), a man

of exceptional genius, quite unknown, and powerless to win hearers for his too individual strain, with an ever-growing sense of utter aloofness from his fellows, faith and hope gone, health failing, now alone in the mean dingy room, now carousing late with some acquaintance, the overwrought, un-sleeping brain tortured all night, hagridden by hell-born phantoms and cruel dreams ! What wonder is it that he sought momentary relief in that poison which only intensifies the suffering it promises to cure ?

The "City of Dreadful Night," published in the *National Reformer*, was the poem that first won him a few admirers—notably a writer in the *Academy*; yet such is our national distaste for original poetry, that no publisher dared to undertake the publication of this and other fine works by Thomson, until Mr. Bertram Dobell, bookseller, and true man, with a disinterested love of literature almost unparalleled in his profession, save in the cases of John Murray and Cottle, though poor himself, took on him half the risk, and persuaded Messrs. Reeves & Turner to take the rest (1880).

He tells us that the human shapes which passed him between those dull interminable rows of houses hardly appeared like his fellow-creatures, but far off aliens, sad and faded. Out of such grisly nights and days, from the grim transformations wrought by the fell magician within, upon those gloomy environments grew the sombre imaginative architecture appropriate to that yet gloomier spiritual city wherein he dwelt; wailful with funeral dirges, whose windows were dark with the baneful shadow materialism, a grandly moulded dolorous word-

temple, dominated by that great sculpture of the Sphinx and armed Angel symbolic of blind Fate, destroying the conscious human spirit, with all Her wondrous appanage of sublime vision, love, and militant aspiration after the Ideal, Durer's awful Image of Melancholia for presiding deity in the holy place. Yet, acid-bitten, and graven into memory and imagination as these creatures are, with a concentrated strength of phrase learned from Dante and Leopardi, I confess that to me this memorable poem has the note rather of a powerful idiosyncrasy afflicted to the verge of madness than the note of an impersonal world-sorrow.

Poor Thomson had long vainly desired publication, and his first book obtained audience "fit though few," but this success came too late to serve him. Fame, long-expected, arrived; but only to look into the face of a dying man. Yet she was in rather a gracious mood for Her, since, as a rule, she prefers to wait till a man is quite dead. But Thomson was a mere stranded wreck, fast breaking up, and incapable of appreciating her somewhat tardy attentions—quite above, or below, caring either for approbation or contempt.

At Leicester, indeed, during the last two years of his life, he passed some almost cheerful days in the company of kind friends (the Barrs), engaged in *dolce far niente*, and lawn tennis. Life and hope seemed to revive within him, but it was only the flicker of the flame before the candle went out. "He looked," says Mr. Flaws, "like a veteran scarred in the fierce affrays of life's war, and worn by the strain of its forced marches; you could see the shadow that tremendous Fate had cast over

that naturally buoyant nature. It had eaten great furrows into his broad brow, and cut tear tracks downward from his wistful eyes, so plaintive and brimful of unspeakable tenderness, as they opened wide when in serious talk,"—yet, in society, his interesting and genial converse prevented the core of inner gloom appearing. But contrast the buoyant and valiant spirit of that most admirable narrative poem, "Weddah and Om-el-Bonain," written in masterly *ottava rima*, or the bold, glad, pagan Nature-worship of the "Naked Goddess," with the weird horror of "In the Room," where the articles of furniture are discoursing about the suicide's body laid stark upon the bed; then hear Mr. Flaws again: "In all verity to me his later life was a sort of suicide, perceived and acquiesced in deliberately by himself." No one knows where he was living the last few weeks in London; but he arrived one day at his friend, Philip Marston's rooms, in the Euston Road, mentally distraught:—blind Philip Marston, my friend also, true poet and gentleman, whose brief life-story too closely resembles Thomson's own. Marston told me that Thomson lay down upon the bed in a dying state. Mr. William Sharp gives a weird account of this in his life of Marston, which should be read in this connection. He was moved thence to the neighbouring University Hospital, where he died two days afterwards, and was buried at Highgate Cemetery, on his heart wearing a locket which enclosed a tress of yellow hair, his one memento of a lost love.

RODEN NOEL.

THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT.

1870—1874.

JAMES THOMSON.

I.

CANTO I.

THE City is of Night, perchance of Death,
But certainly of Night; for never there
Can come the lucid morning's fragrant breath
After the dewy dawning's cold grey air;
The moon and stars may shine with scorn or pity;
The sun has never visited that city,
For it dissolveth in the daylight fair.

Dissolveth like a dream of night away;
Though present in distempered gloom of thought
And deadly weariness of heart all day.

But when a dream night after night is brought
Throughout a week, and such weeks few or many
Recur each year for several years, can any
Discern that dream from real life in aught?

For life is but a dream whose shapes return,
Some frequently, some seldom, some by night
And some by day, some night and day: we learn,
The while all change and many vanish quite,
In their recurrence with recurrent changes
A certain seeming order; where this ranges
We count things real; such is memory's night.

A river girds the city west and south,
The main north channel of a broad lagoon,
Regurging with the salt tides from the mouth ;
Waste marshes shine and glisten to the moon
For leagues ; then moorland black, then stony ridges ;
Great piers and causeways, many noble bridges,
Connect the town and islet suburbs strewn.

Upon an easy slope it lies at large,
And scarcely overlaps the long curved crest
Which swell out two leagues from the river marge.
A trackless wilderness rolls north and west,
Savannahs, savage woods, enormous mountains,
Bleak uplands, black ravines with torrent fountains ;
And eastward rolls the shipless sea's unrest.

The city is not ruinous, although
Great ruins of an unremembered past,
With others of a few short years ago
More sad, are found within its precincts vast.
The street-lamps always burn ; but scarce a casement
In house or palace front from roof to basement
Doth glow or gleam athwart the mirk air cast.

The street-lamps burn amidst the baleful glooms,
Amidst the soundless solitudes immense
Of rangéd mansions dark and still as tombs.
The silence which benumbs or strains the sense
Fulfil with awe the soul's despair unweeping :
Myriads of habitants are ever sleeping,
Or dead, or fled from nameless pestilence !

Yet as in some necropolis you find
Perchance one mourner to a thousand dead,
So there; worn faces that look deaf and blind
Like tragic masks of stone. With weary tread,
Each wrapt in his own doom, they wander, wander,
Or sit foredone and desolately ponder
Through sleepless hours with heavy drooping head.

Mature men chiefly, few in age or youth,
A woman rarely, now and then a child :
A child ! If here the heart turns sick with ruth
To see a little one from birth defiled,
Or lame or blind, as preordained to languish
Thro' youthless life, think how it bleeds with anguish
To meet one erring on that homeless wild.

They often murmur to themselves, they speak
To one another seldom, for their woe
Broods maddening inwardly and scorns to wreak
Itself abroad ; and if at whiles it grow
To frenzy which must rave, none heeds the clamour,
Unless there waits some victim of like glamour,
To rave in turn, who lends attentive show.

The City is of Night, but not of sleep ;
There sweet sleep is not for the weary brain ;
The pitiless hours like years and ages creep,
A night seems termless hell. This dreadful strain
Of thought and consciousness which never ceases,
Or which some moments' stupor but increases,
This, worse than woe, makes wretches there insane.

They leave all hope behind who enter there :
One certitude while sane they cannot leave,
One anodyne for torture and despair ;
The certitude of Death, which no reprieve
Can put off long ; and which, divinely tender,
But waits the outstretched hand to promptly render
That draught whose slumber nothing can bereave.

CANTO II.

Because he seemed to walk with an intent
I followed him ; who, shadowlike and frail,
Unservingly though slowly onward went,
Regardless, wrapt in thought as in a veil :
Thus step for step with lonely sounding feet
We travelled many a long dim silent street.

At length he paused : a black mass in the gloom,
A tower that merged into the heavy sky ;
Around, the huddled stones of grave and tomb :
Some old God's-acre now corruption's sty :
He murmured to himself with dull despair,
Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air.

Then turning to the right went on once more,
And travelled weary roads without suspense ;
And reached at last a low wall's open door,
Whose villa gleamed beyond the foliage dense :
He gazed, and muttered with a hard despair,
Here Love died, stabbed by its own worshipped pair.

Then turning to the right resumed his march,
And travelled streets and lanes with wondrous
Until on stooping through a narrow arch [strength,
We stood before a squalid house at length :
He gazed, and whispered with a cold despair,
Here Hope died, starved out in its utmost lair.

When he had spoken thus, before he stirred,
I spake, perplexed by something in the signs
Of desolation I had seen and heard
In this drear pilgrimage to ruined shrines :
When Faith and Love and Hope are dead indeed,
Can Life still live ? By what doth it proceed ?

As whom his one intense thought overpowers,
He answered coldly, Take a watch, erase
The signs and figures of the circling hours,
Detach the hands, remove the dial-face ;
The works proceed until run down ; although
Bereft of purpose, void of use, still go.

Then turning to the right paced on again,
And travassed squares and travelled streets whose
Seemed more and more familiar to my ken ; [glooms
And reached that sullen temple of the tombs ;
And paused to murmur with the old despair,
Here Faith died, poisoned by this charnel air.

I ceased to follow, for the knot of doubt
Was severed sharply with a cruel knife :
He circled thus for ever tracing out
The series of the fraction left of Life ;
Perpetual recurrence in the scope
Of but three terms, dead Faith, dead Love, dead Hope.

CANTO III.

Although lamps burn along the silent streets ;
Even when moonlight silvers empty squares
The dark holds countless lanes and close retreats ;
But when the night its sphereless mantle wears
The open spaces yawn with gloom abysmal,
The sombre mansions loom immense and dismal,
The lanes are black as subterranean lairs.

And soon the eye a strange new vision learns :
The night remains for it as dark and dense,
Yet clearly in this darkness it discerns
As in the daylight with its natural sense ;
Perceives a shade in shadow not obscurely,
Pursues a stir of black in blackness surely,
Sees spectres also in the gloom intense.

The ear, too, with the silence vast and deep
Becomes familiar though unreconciled ;
Hears breathings as of hidden life asleep,
And muffled throbs as of pent passions wild,
Far murmurs, speech of pity or derision ;
But all more dubious than the things of vision,
So that it knows now when it is beguiled.

No time abates the first despair and awe,
But wonder ceases soon ; the weirdest thing
Is felt least strange beneath the lawless law
Where Death-in-Life is the eternal king ;
Crushed impotent beneath this reign of terror,
Dazed with such mysteries of woe and error,
The soul is too outworn for wondering.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

JAMES THOMSON.

I.—ART.

(III.)

SINGING is sweet ; but be sure of this,
Lips only sing when they cannot kiss.
Did he ever suspire a tender lay
While her presence took his breath away ?
Had his fingers been able to toy with her hair
Would they then have written the verses fair ?
Had she let his arm steal round her waist
Would the lovely portrait yet be traced ?
Since he could not embrace it flushed and warm
He has carved in stone the perfect form.
Who gives the fine report of the feast ?
He who got none and enjoyed it least.
Were the wine really slipping down his throat
Would his song of the wine advance a note ?
Will you puff out the music that sways the whirl
Or dance and make love with a pretty girl ?
Who shall the great battle-story write ?
Not the hero down in the thick of the fight,
Statues and pictures and verse may be grand,
But they are not the Life for which they stand.

II.—E. B. B.

1861;

THE white-rose garland at her feet,
The crown of laurel at her head,
Her noble life on earth complete,
Lay her in the last low bed
For the slumber calm and deep :
“ He giveth His beloved sleep.”

Soldiers find their fittest grave
In the field whereon they died ;
So her spirit pure and brave
Leaves the clay it glorified
To the land for which she fought
With such grand impassioned thought.

Keats and Shelley sleep at Rome,
She in well-loved Tuscan earth ;
Finding all their death's long home
Far from their old home of birth.
Italy, you hold in trust
Very sacred English dust.

Therefore this one prayer I breathe,—
That you yet may worthy prove
Of the heirlooms they bequeath
Who have loved you with such love :
Fairest land while land of slaves
Yields their free souls no fit graves.

III.—A RECUSANT.

THE Church stands there beyond the orchard-blooms ;
How yearningly I gaze upon its spire !
Lifted mysterious through the twilight glooms,
Dissolving in the sunset's golden fire,
Or dim as slender incense morn by morn
Ascending to the blue and open sky.
For ever when my heart feels most forlorn
It murmurs to me with a weary sigh,
How sweet to enter in, to kneel and pray
With all the others whom we love so well !
All disbelief and doubt might pass away,
All peace float to us with its Sabbath bell.
Conscience replies, There is but one good rest,
Whose head is pillowed upon Truth's pure breast.

SUNDAY AT HAMPSTEAD.

(AN IDLE IDYL BY A VERY HUMBLE MEMBER OF THE
GREAT AND NOBLE LONDON MOB.)

1863—1865.

JAMES THOMSON.

(1.)

THIS is the Heath of Hampstead,
There is the Dome of St. Paul's ;
Beneath on the serried house tops,
A chequed lustre falls :

And the mighty city of London,
Under the clouds and the light,
Seems a low wet beach, half shingle
With a few sharp rocks upright.

Here we will sit, my darling,
And dream an hour away :
The donkeys are hurried and worried,
But we are not donkeys to-day.

Through all the weary week, dear,
We toil in the work down there,
Tied to a desk and a counter,
A patient stupid pair !

* * * * *

Would you grieve very much, my darling,
If all yon low wet shore
Were drowned by a mighty flood tide
And we never toiled there more ?

Wicked !—there is no sin, dear,
In an idle dreamer's head ;
He turns the world topsy-turvy
To prove that his soul's not dead.

I am sinking, sinking, sinking ;
It is hard to sit upright !
Your lap is the softest pillow ;
Good night, my love, good night !

(II.)

How your eyes dazzle down into my soul !

I drink and drink of their deep violet wine,
And ever thirst the more, although my whole
Dazed being whirls in drunkenness divine.

Pout down your lips from that bewildering smile,
And kiss me for the interruption, Sweet !

I had escaped you ; floating for awhile
In that far cloud ablaze with living heat :

I floated through it, through the solemn skies
I melted with it up the Crystal Sea
Into the Heaven of Heavens ; and shut my eyes
To feel eternal rest enfolding me.

Well, I prefer one tyrannous girl down here,
You jealous, violet-eyed Bewitcher, you ;
To being lord in Mohammed's seventh sphere
Of meekest houris, threescore ten and two.

(III.)

Was it hundreds of years ago, my Love,
Was it thousands of miles away,
That two poor creatures we knew, my Love,
Were toiling day by day ;
Were toiling, weary, weary,
With many myriads more,
In a City dark and dreary
On a sullen river's shore.

Was it truly a fact, or a dream, my Love ?

I think my brain still reels,
And my ears still throbbing, seem, my Love,
With the rush and the clang of wheels ;
Of a vast machinery roaring
For ever in skyless gloom ;
Where the poor slaves, peace imploring,
Found peace alone in the tomb.

Was it hundreds of years ago, my Love,

Was it thousands of miles away ?
Or was it a dream to show, my Love,
The rapture of to-day ?
This day of holy splendour,
This sabbath of rich rest,
Wherein to God we render
All praise by being blest.

(x.)

As we rush, as we rush in the Train,
The trees and the houses go wheeling back,
But the starry heavens above the plain
Come flying on our track.

Oh the beautiful stars in the sky,
The silver doves of the forest of Night,
Over the dull earth swarm and fly,
Companions of our flight.

We will rush ever on without fear ;
Let the goal be far, the flight be fleet !
For we carry the Heavens with us, dear,
While the Earth slips from our feet !

(xi.)

Day after day of this azure May,
The blood of this Spring has swelled in my veins ;
Night after night of broad moonlight,
A mystical dream has dazzled my brains.

A seething might, a fierce delight,
The blood of the Spring is the wine of the world ;
My veins run fire and thrill desire,
Every leaf of my heart's red rose uncurled.

A sad sweet calm, a tearful balm,
The light of the Moon is the trance of the world ;
My brain is fraught with yearning thought,
And the rose is pale and its leaves are furled.

O speed the day, then dear, dear May,
And hasten the night I charge thee, O June,
When the trance divine shall burn with the wine,
And the red rose unfurl all its fire to the moon.

(XII.)

O mellow moonlight warm,
Weave round my Love a charm ;
O countless, starry eyes
Watch from the holy skies ;
O ever-solemn night,
Shield her within thy might :
 Watch her, my little one !
 Shield her, my darling !

How my heart shrinks with fear,
Nightly to leave thee, dear ;
Lovely and pure within,
Vast glooms of woe and sin :
Our wealth of love and bliss
Too heavenly-perfect is :
 Good night, my little one !
 God keep thee, darling.

SUNDAY UP THE RIVER.

(AN IDYL OF COCKNEYDOM.)

JAMES THOMSON.

(IV.)

THE Church bells are ringing :

How green the earth, how fresh and fair !

The thrushes are singing :

What rapture but to breathe this air !

The Church bells are ringing :

Lo, how the river dreameth there,

The thrushes are singing :

Green flames wave lightly everywhere !

The Church bells are ringing :

How all the world breathes praise and prayer !

The thrushes are singing :

What Sabbath peace doth trance the air !

(IX.)

Like violets pale i' the Spring of the year

Came my Love's sad eyes to my youth ;

Wan and dim with many a tear,

But the sweeter for that in sooth :

Wet and dim,

Tender and true

Violet eyes

Of the sweetest blue.

Like pansies dark i' the June o' the year,

Grow my Love's glad eyes to my prime ;

Rich with the purple splendour clear

Of their thoughtful bliss sublime :

Deep and dark,

Solemn and true

Pansy eyes

Of the noblest blue.

(XV.)

Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail ;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health
Or sea nor shore shall fail.

Give a man a pipe he can smoke,
Give a man a book he can read ;
And his home is bright with a calm delight,
Though the rooms be poor indeed.

Give a man a girl he can love,
As I, O my Love, love thee ;
And his hand is great with the pulse of Fate,
At home, on land, on sea.

(XVII.)

Let my voice ring out and over the earth,
Through all the grief and strife,
With a golden joy in a silver mirth :
Thank God for Life.

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss,
To the azure dome above,
With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss ;
Thank God for Love.

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above,
The whole world through :
O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
Thank God for you !

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